

The
BLACK
BOOK

George
Bronson
Howard

✓

B.25

45



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE BLACK BOOK





"We will give you one minute to finish it, Mr. Norroy," said the man, eyes on his watch.

THE BLACK BOOK

Being the full Account of how The Book of the
Betrayers came into the hands of Yorke Norroy,
Secret Agent of the Department of State

*Compiled from The Narrative of Miss Clovis Clarke
and other authentic sources, in the archives of
the Bureau of Counter-Espionage and
Secret Intelligence.*

By GEORGE BRONSON-HOWARD



FRONTISPIECE BY
PAUL STAHR

A. L. BURT COMPANY
Publishers New York

Published by arrangement with W. J. Watt & Company

COPYRIGHT, 1920, BY
W. J. WATT & COMPANY

CONTENTS

Book One

The Book of the Betrayers

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. IN WHICH OUR HERO ESCAPES ON HORSEBACK	3
II. IN WHICH YORKE NORROY SUSPECTS THAT CHARLES PETERSHAM HAS SHARED THE USUAL FATE OF HEROES AND BEEN FALSELY ACCUSED.....	14
III. TELLS HOW YORKE NORROY FELL INTO ENEMY-ALIEN HANDS AND HOW HE FELL OUT AGAIN.....	34
IV. IN WHICH OUR HERO INDULGES IN ESCAPE NUMBER TWO AND TELLS ALL ABOUT "THE BLACK BOOK."...	43

Book Two

An Enemy to the Emperor

I. IN WHICH ULRIC ULM BECOMES ULRICH VON UHLM AGAIN.....	59
II. TELLS ABOUT THE CATACOMBS OF MANHATTAN ISLE....	73
III. HOW ULRIC ULM BECAME A DECOY TO ATTRACT AN ATTRACTIVE "VAMPIRE".....	83
IV. IN WHICH YORKE NORROY, AS ULRIC ULM, ENTERS THE HOUSE OF THE BETRAYERS.....	96
V. TELLS ABOUT THE BATTLE OF VAN CORLEAR SQUARE...	105

Book Three

The Bureau of Missing Articles

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. IN WHICH A BLACK BOOK FALLS FROM THE SKY..	121
(The Narrative of Clovis Clarke, I.)	
II. TELLS HOW HER ENEMIES PLOTTED UNDERGROUND....	128
III. IN WHICH OUR HERO HEARS HER VOICE ON THE WIRE AND RUSHES TO HER ASSISTANCE.....	141
IV. IN WHICH I HIDE THE BLACK BOOK AND PAY A TERRIBLE PRICE FOR ITS POSSESSION.....	151
(The Narrative of Clovis Clarke, II.)	
V. TELLS HOW YORKE NORROY FOUND A WOUNDED BOY TO TELL HIM OF A KIDNAPPED GIRL.....	173

Book Four

His Country or His Life

I. TELLS ABOUT THE MAN WHO FLED FROM HIMSELF.....	181
II. HOW ANOTHER MAN PURSUED HIM.....	188
III. WHAT WAS HAPPENING UNDERGROUND MEANWHILE... (The Narrative of Clovis Clarke, III.)	195
IV. IN WHICH ANOTHER PRISONER ENTERS..... (Clovis Clarke Continues Her Narrative.)	205
V. TELLS OF A TORTURE TORQUEMADA MIGHT HAVE ENVIED.....	213
VI. HOW ETHAN VAN CORLEAR PROVED WORTHY OF HIS NAME.....	221

Book Five

A Leaf from the Kaiser's Book

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. TELLS HOW TWO PRISONERS FARED.....	231
II. IN WHICH NORROY BUILDS A SCAFFOLD TO HANG A HUN AS HIGH AS HAMAN.....	245
III. TELLS HOW THE LAST OF THE VAN DUYCKINCKS DIFFERED FROM THE LAST OF THE VAN CORLEARS— TO HIS ANCESTORS' EVERLASTING SHAME.....	259
IV. HOW KNATCHBULL CAME TO HOLD BOTH HANDS HIGH. 268 (The Narrative of Clovis Clarke, V.)	
V. IN WHICH THE FREIHERR EITEL VON KNAFFT GOES TO MEET HIS GOD AS A GENTLEMAN OF SUABIA SHOULD—AS CONTRADISTINGUISHED FROM A PRUSSIAN. 278 (Clovis Clarke Concludes.)	
VI. HOW ENSIGN CHARLES PETERSHAM, U. S. N., CAME TO WEAR THE UNIFORM AFTER ALL; AND THE COLLATOR TO IMITATE MISS CLARKE AND CONCLUDE THE TALE.....	287

THE BLACK BOOK

BOOK ONE
THE BOOK OF THE BETRAYERS

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH OUR HERO ESCAPES ON HORSEBACK

TO a practiced eye the man who approached the gate of the Brooklyn navy yard one afternoon late in the year 1916, was so consistently inconspicuous that he defeated his own purpose. That is to say, he became conspicuous by being too inconspicuous. The neutral, almost sad-colored clothes, hat, and necktie would surely have aroused suspicion in the sort of person for whom they were donned when taken in connection with the keen, alert-eyed face of their wearer.

The guard patrolling his little section of sidewalk on either side of the gate was not such a person. Consequently he was surprised when he saw the badge, whose silver plating flashed momentarily in the last rays of sunlight.

This badge was shown in lieu of a pass. There was no war for America as yet, but the navy yard harbored secrets as well as warships—sometimes the two in combination. One might not pass within unless vouched for.

This guard, having had a plethora of such duty, had seen such badges before, and was to see one soon again. For just such another—than which there is

none easier to imitate—flashed in the palm of a second stranger.

This second stranger seemed to have no objection to being conspicuous. Else why clatter up to the gate on horseback? Why wear riding clothes of a cut and texture so unusual that one must know them instantly for continental clothes?

The face above them was not necessarily continental. The elimination of mustache and *en brosse* hair do much to overcome anything extreme in appearances, although this man's face was so very white and his hair so very black that, unless he donned a disguise, once seen, he was not apt to be forgotten.

He had delayed his entry into the yard until the first stranger had had time to enter the commandant's office at the extreme end of what, from the gate, seemed a long alley of workshops and office buildings. There, on a snow-covered knoll, its windows overlooking river and bay, was the office-hour habitat of him responsible to the nation for that part of the its navy stationed there; many appurtenances and additions thereto in the course of construction and repair particularly.

So much "particularly" that the offices of construction and repair covered more ground than those of any other of the departments; had on its pay roll for both offices and workshops many more names. The Chief Constructor, in his turn responsible to the commandant, was next in rank to the officer in charge of the Washington Bureau of the same title and slated to succeed him when retired.

It was to this officer that a messenger was hurriedly dispatched a few moments after the overinconspicuous gentleman had entered the commandant's office.

The second gentleman of the badge had only just tethered his horse near that office and was busy with his tethering. Any one near enough to notice, however, would have seen that the horse was sufficiently secured long since. Its owner kept an eye on the commandant's messenger until that worthy vanished around the corner. Then the stranger proceeded to make himself scarce by the simple process of proceeding toward that same corner by a longer route.

He reached it just in time to see the messenger returning in company with a fair-haired, brown-eyed youngster who carried himself with that conscious jauntiness very young men sometimes assume when wearing for the first time a suit of new and becoming clothes.

From his made-to-order collar to his made-to-order shoes this lad was the pink of properness. New-comers to the yard almost always mistook him for a young officer in mufti. Which pleased this particular lad very much, as he had painstakingly modeled himself after these very young officers.

When Charlie Petersham first had come to the yard as assistant draftsman at three dollars and twenty-eight cents per diem he had been fresh from a technical course, to pay for which entailed all sorts of denials; hence had looked shabby and ready-made and generally second rate, or even third or fourth.

No, on second thoughts, hardly that; for his fresh,

clean-skinned, small-featured face would always win him more than ordinary attention. And his eyes were so exceedingly intent. He was as yet too young to have developed much sense of humor. Nothing was too small for him to take seriously.

It was just as well for him. This thoroughness of his, in conjunction with his rather remarkable talent for draftsmanship, made his drawings mute evidence of a thorough grasp of details. His ability to correlate those details from a mere verbal explanation on the constructor's part, was invaluable in the office of C. & R.

"It's as easy to tell young Petersham what to draw as it is to dictate a letter to Miss Stevens," the senior assistant constructor had said to his chief only a few days before. "He'll be chief draftsman if old Benny ever dies or decides to resign. Pity the boy's held up that way. Can't you do better for him than five four a day?"

For Charlie had had a promotion soon after entering the yard.

"That's all the bureau permits me to pay any one except those specifically provided for by Congressional appropriation," the chief constructor had replied

And if you wonder how he had that tongue-twisting phrase so pat, it is only because you do not know how many times a year it had to serve as an excuse.

"But don't bother about Charlie," the C. C. had continued. "He'll be one of *us* very shortly. He's kept up with his studies, latterly under my instruction. I sent home for my old books and exam papers, and

there's an examination to be held for assistant constructors in three months. He'll go through it galloping."

Which explains how well the youth who accompanied the messenger stood with his superiors. A more able and industrious employee, one at once apt and engaging, was to be found nowhere in the navy department until that unlucky hour when the inconspicuously conspicuous gentleman with the badge entered into his affairs.

It had been dark all day—dismal, too—the sun appearing only at intervals, and then but briefly, soon smothered by snow clouds banking up to north and west. With its final disappearance for the day, darkness set in sooner than usual; the snow clouds growing bigger and blacker. Charles Petersham entered the commandant's office just in time to escape the first few flakes that fell, the precursors of light, scattering puffs of snow that the wind whirled out and over the river like swarms of white bees.

The commandant sat at his deck facing the river, first his finger tips, then his palms meeting, his hands never still. One that had the privilege of knowing the old fellow well would have recognized this nervous trick of fingers and palms as the greatest outward display of emotion he ever allowed himself to show. He had shown no more when a boiler had burst on his little gunboat, his first command, away back in Civil War times, and that when in close pursuit, and, it seemed, inevitable capture of a flying foe.

Hence, had any one who knew him well been pres-

ent, that one, if kindly, would have breathed a prayer for Master Petersham.

The commandant wasted no time answering the boy's salute—another bad omen—for, looking upon himself as one of them already—being in no doubt as to his ability to pass the examination that would make him Ensign Petersham, U. S. N.—the boy had fallen into the officers' custom of clapping a flattened hand at right angles to his cheek bones when addressing one superior in rank. This habit had hitherto been encouraged. Consequently, at the omission of the return salute, Petersham's flush was as rosy red as the bud he wore as a boutonnière.

"Sir?"

Rear Admiral Thorneycroft arose in his measured wrath. He took from the hands of the department-of-justice agent a piece of tracing paper, folded and refolded to fit an envelope of ordinary letter size.

"Yours, I think?"

The boy unfolded the tracing. Both men watched him as the light of recognition leaped into his eyes. But before he could stammer out what his suddenly confused wits suggested the stranger said quietly:

"It would be useless for him to deny it. We have been watching the house at 192½ Sands Street for several weeks and censoring the letters mailed from there. All the other mail is in that sort of code that reads like ordinary 'news-from-home' stuff, and we couldn't make head or tail of it. But this——"

His face darkened as he turned to the commandant.

"Unfortunately some one tipped them off, Admiral.

Perhaps our man who got the letter that contained this went about his work clumsily. *He* said something about the new postman making a row and forcing him to go through a long red-tape rigmarole before he got it. At any rate, after we got the goods on the people there and went to nab them, they'd shot the moon. So this fine bird of yours is the only one we bag this trip. However——"

The boy saw the gleam of nickel plate in the man's hand that came out of his pocket. Despite the gathering shadows, the green-shaded desk lamp on the commandant's desk revealed only too well the sinister import.

His breath was coming in quick, short gasps. Try as he would, Charlie Petersham could not control himself nor wink away the—to him—unmanly moisture that was making everything misty wherever his eyes looked. But not so misty he did not recognize the two circlets of nickel-plated steel for the badges of shame they were.

"Listen—oh, please, sir! Do listen! I—how could you think——"

"Unfortunately, Petersham, it is not a matter for thought. The evidence is before us. You have been caught giving government secrets to people long suspected of being German spies. And suspected *rightly*—as this paper you obligingly furnished them shows."

He motioned to the man from the department of justice, who advanced, handcuffs in hand.

"Not that," cried young Petersham, a new look in his eyes, one of outraged dignity, of misplaced con-

fidence, of one who has had sore hurt from a world hitherto believed to be bright, beautiful, benign. "Not that! It would kill my mother. She's sick; she's awfully sick, Admiral. Don't do it; give me a chance to prove——"

But the stranger stood now but a scant few feet from him, and was inexorably decreasing even that distance every second.

Petersham put out both hands. "Admiral!" he entreated. "Admiral! Don't! Oh, God! If it gets into the papers that I'm in jail and my mother sees it—she's at the hospital; she's going under an operation——Admiral, don't let him put those things on me without giving me a chance to explain——"

But the man waited for no further permission from the commandant. His breath was hot on Petersham's face; his eyes looked hard and cold, the eyes of one impervious either to a sick mother's or a suffering son's anguish.

"Put out your hands!" he ordered impassively.

Petersham took one look at those utterly unemotional eyes, gave one glance at that grim mouth, so mercilessly set—and something changed inside him. So might he have been affected by an electric shock or one from icy water.

But the man misunderstood the menace of the boy's eyes, from which all blitheness had fled; remained only the bitterness of the betrayed, which changed quickly to the blaze that betokens the fighting man when his blood is up.

"Come on, now. Put 'em out——"

"All right! I'll—put—'em—out——" answered Petersham, breathing deeply.

The next moment the other was on his back, his head striking a corner of the desk as he fell. And, as the admiral turned from the man who struck to the man so suddenly stricken, Petersham seized the French windows overlooking the river, and with the same fierce strength burst them open, not waiting to unfasten the lock.

Wood and glass splintered all about the admiral as he turned again. But it was only to see a fool's leap through the air. For this was a second-story room, and one taking such a jump might reasonably be expected to topple over when he reached the ground, leg broken or something worse.

Admiral Thorneycroft smote his desk bell, and, the office messenger appearing from outside, he barked brief, hoarse commands.

But there had been another who was beforehand. The second stranger, who had also shown a department-of-justice badge, had sauntered slowly up the side-walk during the short colloquy in the office, and had now stationed himself on the river side of the commandant's quarters, apparently aimlessly gazing here—there—anywhere.

But when the window crashed open above him, and, an instant after, the lad's leap had landed him in the snow bank beside the man below, the other spoke to him as sharply and as tersely as had the admiral to his employee.

"Jump on my horse there by the hitching post.

Snatch this riding crop out of my hand and threaten me. Then ride like the devil. We'll see you through."

As escape was his only object just then, Petersham obeyed. Nor was his gesture with the snatched riding crop altogether acting. At that time nothing would have suited his mood more than to bring that heavy weapon—for apparently the stock was loaded—in violent contact with the head of somebody—anybody.

He sprang across the little, snowy hillock, and slid down to the path before the messenger had reached the first floor. The horse's reins were in an easy-running knot. He unfastened them with strong fingers that, though hitherto they had trembled, became, as soon as they gripped anything, surprisingly steady.

The horse loose, he flung a leg across its back and cut at its flank with the crop. The effect of this unexpected, stinging blow was to make the horse careen and then to fling itself into a hand gallop.

Behind him came the man who had ridden him.

"Stop him! Runaway, runaway!" he cried at the top of his lungs.

So that before the true state of affairs could reach any one outside the commandant's office, employees of the navy yard observed one of their colleagues being carried off at a swift pace by a horse which, if the shouts behind were to be believed, had apparently lost his head through some scare or the other.

So, too, thought the guard at the gate, who knew young Petersham well. Hence he allowed to pass both the rider of the horse and the panting, pursuing owner. He even grinned a little at the latter.

But neither he nor any one else in the navy yard grinned when they saw a low, underslung racing car pull out of the first street intersecting that one down which Petersham was plunging. For by this time the panting messenger and others had apprised them of the true nature of the young draftsman's flight, and they saw in the backing motor car the interposition of a just Providence.

They took up the pursuit again.

So adroitly was the car handled that it blocked the street completely, yet gave Petersham no reason to believe that it was purposely blocking *him*. So he drew rein within a foot or so of the car, and shouted for them to get out of the way.

At the same moment the former rider of the horse, who had not ceased running when the others did, and who was extraordinarily fleet of foot, arrived and leaped on the foot of the running board, beckoning Petersham to follow.

So it was that, just as the navy-yard men dashed up, panting, but prepared for battle, the car, with the horse's two ex-riders clinging to its doors, sped away so recklessly that it had reached Cumberland Place before the most enterprising of its pursuers had done much more than a block on the back of the horse.

By this time, Petersham and his rescuer had long since taken seats in the rear, and the racing roadster presented no unusual appearance as it turned down another side street and was lost to the third horseman's view.

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH YORKE NORROY SUSPECTS PETERSHAM HAS BEEN FALSELY ACCUSED

THE St. Anthony Club, so called, was in reality the headquarters of the secret agents of the department of state; the "corps" of which Yorke Norroy, by virtue both of length and brilliance of service, was the unofficial "dean." None entered by its brass-knockerred, stout-oaken doorway, set between two gleaming white Georgian pillars, who was not a member of this most peculiar branch of public service, the only one whose employees are not recorded in official blue books.

Of all those who entered only Norroy himself was held in higher esteem than Carson Huntley, sometimes known as Norroy's "left hand." Whenever Norroy had a case "on" of more than usual importance, Huntley was always the first one summoned, and on a certain evening a few weeks after Petersham rode off into the unknown, in obedience to just such a summons, Carson Huntley came to the club.

In the reading room, by the fire, he saw several others of the corps, but his interest in what Norroy might have to say sent him scurrying up the stairs, taking two at time, until he reached the "private"

library, so called to distinguish it from the big library below, which contained several thousand books. This smaller one had not that many hundred, but most of them were in handwriting, and any one on its shelves had cost perhaps a thousand times as much as one of those on the shelves below.

For here, in securely locked, diamond-paned bookcases were the reports of the secret agents, and this room was in reality Norroy's private office.

He sat now at his desk in the dusk, looking down on old Delaroche Street, where Georgian-style houses in red brick and with mansard roofs shared honors with those of even older, gabled architecture.

These gables, along with the stacks and clusters of chimney pots, gave a quaint Old World charm to the Delaroche Street sky line as seen from Norroy's window—for the St. Anthony Club was housed in the mansion that had been the greatest of the great in that neighborhood of bygone aristocrats—and its top windows overlooked them all.

"Read those," said Norroy, handing a packet to Carson. "My latest case. Yours, too."

He lounged on toward the fire, leaving Huntley to turn on the light at the center table and read. But for all Norroy's lounging manner there was a certain studied elegance about the man that the uninitiated were apt to take as indicative of his entire character. No greater mistake could have been made. Although his greatest ambitions seemed to be to tie the perfect dress tie, design the newest waistcoat—and wear it—and open the first german of the season with the pret-

tiest débutante of the year, the real Yorke Norroy was one who had caused certain alterations in the map of the world, and was the most feared, perhaps, of all the secret agents operating on it.

Constant training had kept his figure much the same as when Huntley first knew him; the increase in years had but changed the qualifying adjective from "slim" to "lean."

Observe him, then, on the eve of what was to be his most important mission in Bond Street clothes of that peculiar dark-green serge he favored; silken waistcoat and tie from Paris, one matching the other, and both of alternating stripes of silk and satin of a deep rich chocolate color! a Charvet white silk shirt and boots of a similar color to his waistcoat—the incurable dandy, the same ten years before, ten years hence. Save for the multitude of fine lines that crisscrossed his forehead until, under the light by the table which he now approached, it showed like another man's palm. If they increased in the coming ten years as they had in that decade just passed, Norroy must wear his hat pulled over his brows if he wished to give any impression of youth.

"It was inevitable that the corps should come to grips with Prussian espionage sooner or later," he said, advancing on Carson as the latter tossed to the table the packet of "flimsies"—special-service reports from various bureaus, all concerning the Petersham case. "And though this draftsman affair is a small wormhole, it may lead us to the center of a very big and very rotten tree. But, being *such* a small worm-

hole, it needs some conniving to make it lead anywhere at all——”

He glanced at Huntley, who had become a human interrogation point. Norroy answered his unspoken question:

“I mean lots of little wormholes only go a little way. For the boy’s sake, I hope this may be true of his case. For ours—the country’s—it might be as well—nay, better—if he *were* a traitor.”

Norroy took Huntley’s silence as a sign he must explain further.

“Well, then,” he decided slowly, judicially; “I can’t believe in Petersham’s guilt. I firmly believe we’re hounding somebody who could and would help us if we gave him the chance——”

“Then why are you instructed simply to ‘get Petersham?’” asked Carson Huntley, after a moment of startled surprise.

“Let me put it differently, dear boy.” Norroy smiled. “Why should our department meddle at all with so small a matter as ‘getting’ an unimportant youngster who traced a section of certain machinery and gave it to a girl?”

“A girl?”

“Haven’t you read the reports?” asked Norroy impatiently. He took the elastic band from the packet, riffled over the folded “press copies,” the impress of the official green ink showing through each. Norroy, who could read backward almost as readily as the usual way, selected one after a leisurely interval, and handed it over.

"You will find that to be a copy of the reports of Operator—167, D. J., concerning the department's espionage over the house at 192½ Sands Street. It begins with the old man of the house being recognized as one of the visitors to Von Klaper, already convicted; it goes on to tell how he was followed and a watch placed over Sands Street, front and back entrances. Now, go on a little farther. How many times do you read the item: 'Girl went out alone?' Eh?"

Huntley scanned one page, turned it—another—a third, a fourth.

"I've already counted well on toward twoscore."

"Very well. Now turn back. How many times do you see this item: 'Girl returned with very blond young man,' with an asterisk following the annotation 'Petersham' in red ink in the column—eh?"

Huntley's movements were much as before. So was his answer:

"Good! Now you will notice that this item occurs fifteen times at least before it has this addition: 'He went in, remained short period.'"

"I was counting those, too, Yorke."

"Well, how many times does that addition occur? You see! Only half a dozen times out of perhaps thirty-three. Doesn't it suggest anything to you?"

Huntley pondered.

"You mean Petersham was attracted by the girl and fell into some trap?"

Norroy nodded.

"But the tracing?"

"Although they are very careful to avoid saying just *what* it was a tracing of, you will notice that it is always referred to as——"

Norroy had been riffling the flimsies again. Having found the one he wanted, he read:

"'A significant part of an invention owned exclusively by this government, but of enormous value to any warring nation, particularly at the present moment.' Remember, Carson, '*a part!*' Don't you realize that Petersham was probably ignorant of the value of what he was drawing; that it might have seemed to him to be something equally applicable to some *innocent* invention? For here is another fact the D. J. and S. S. operators do not seem to have noticed—they were too busy supposing Petersham to be guilty—*the old man posed as an inventor.*'"

It was plain from the emphasis Norroy put on his last words that he considered them the clincher of the argument. Huntley had followed his train of thought.

"I see," he said.

"Now, observe again," Norroy went on, "that every letter mailed by this old man from Sands Street was a blind. Those letters he mailed have been turned over to all the code experts in the state, war, and navy building; not one could make head or tail of them—see their reports. And this, after the D. J. and S. S. people had also puzzled over them to no avail, remember."

"They thought they were the 'news-from-home' type," objected Huntley; "the kind where each phrase

like 'Aunt Jemima's sick servant is well again' means some other phrase in some pre-arranged——"

"But the letters are not long enough for that," said Norroy, flecking what to Carson were invisible pieces of lint from his spotless, creaseless coat. He seemed so entirely absorbed in this harmless pastime that even the man who knew him best, Carson Huntley, and who therefore knew that busy brain was never idle, felt the same annoyance that outsiders, not in the secret of Norroy's state-department connections, often felt toward "that brainless idler."

"Not long enough by half. Look at the copies attached." Norroy waved them in his thin, white fingers. Huntley took them.

"You see, half a page or so: That system requires extremely long, complicated sentences, where every real word is expressed by half a dozen fakes. Strange how easy it seems to be to overlook such incontestable facts. Well, let me get on with my theory. Why was so much trouble taken over this particular boy? I'll venture that they have bought tracings of other parts that go to make up this whole and that they haven't taken half so much trouble. For observe, they make no other use of the girl and of the old man impersonating an inventor. Again see the reports. No one else was seen at 192½ Sands Street. They went to see no one else. They corresponded with no one else. They had no telephone."

He paused to light one of his gold-tipped, gold-crested cigarettes, and blew a cloud of perfumed smoke toward the fireplace.

"Those letters were all plainly addressed to people in Germany—people who have no existence; I'll swear to that!"

"But the tracing. It was addressed to the same people."

"Precisely. I'm coming to that. Before that tracing ever left Sands Street I'll guarantee a *tracing of it* was made. Why? Well, follow me closely now. They must have known they were being watched long before. They must have known this tracing—the *original tracing*—would fall into the enemy's hands. The fact that they knew what this would mean to Petersham is evident in that they had a means of escape ready for him. That Petersham did *not* know what it would mean to him was evident from the fact that he came to work at the yard that day. Would he have done that if he had known one of *his own tracings* of a governmental secret had been seized in the mails the night before? And if he was working *with* them, wouldn't they have *warned* him? They had sense enough to decamp themselves."

He blew a feathery bit of ash from his coat sleeve with the air of one concerned in a serious matter. Huntley watched him with an affectionate smile.

"The same old Yorke," he meditated aloud. "Any one would think what you're doing now is the matter of moment; what you are talking about only some slight, unimportant, everyday matter. Yet you've seen something that has gotten past the department of justice, the secret service, and the naval intelligence office.

You're undoubtedly right so far. But what does all this prove?"

"Granting my premises—which you're kind enough to do—it proves: First, that they knew they couldn't bribe young Petersham and that the part he was tracing was important enough to make all that inventor-and-his-poor-but-beautiful-daughter play acting necessary. Which involved the use of one of their prettiest women and one of their smartest men; second, that after Petersham was thus brought to the attention of their chief operator, he decided the young fellow had so much and such peculiar ability that he would be worth more to them than to the United States. Otherwise, wouldn't they have let him be led off to Federal prison instead of taking so many risks to rescue him. Third, it proves that men at the head of this system—particularly *the man*—is pretty well equipped with general knowledge about what is going on in the navy yards and elsewhere. Yes, even in *our* spy services. It looks as if I'd met some one worthy of my steel. And I'm glad of it, Carson," said Yorke Norroy suddenly. "I'm tired of easy victories over nonentities."

"Don't forget present instructions. They are simply: 'Get Petersham.' "

"I don't think that's going to be very hard. From what this sheaf of papers tell me about the boy, I imagine he's as anxious to see me as I am to see him—to see *anybody* who'd believe his story. And I'm going to give him the chance. Where would you imagine he'd be? What sort of place, I mean? And doing what?"

"Why don't you make all of your questions as easy as the last, Yorke? Why, lying low, I should say——"

"Precisely. And a man who's lying low spends most of his time reading, doesn't he? And a man who has every reason to believe half a dozen kinds of police are on his trail—what does he read first—by preference? Particularly in Petersham's case? The report says he has a mother almost at death's door, and that he begged and pleaded with the admiral about this, saying if news of his being in jail got into the papers it would surely kill her——"

"The answer to all of which is, I suppose, that young Petersham eagerly devours the daily papers?"

"From cellar to garret—from front-page headlines to advertising columns. And the 'Agony Column' is the first advertising, next to the theatrical, that everybody reads. I therefore inserted the following in all the principal morning papers.

Norroy tapped thoughtfully with a cigarette at the heads of a sprawling double dragon on his case of Chinese gold.

"Here it is:

DRAFTSMAN WANTED

If C. P., who left C. & R. Department, New York, N. Y., two weeks ago, will communicate to undersigned where he can be met, undersigned promises to come alone. If C. P. is what undersigned believes him to be, he will eagerly accept this offer. Box 31. This office.

Norroy flicked the press cutting from which he had been reading across the table to Huntley.

"*This* morning?" asked the latter.

Norroy nodded.

"But you only wired to Washington for me this morning?"

"I was quite sure I'd get a reply one way or another," answered Norroy, yawning. "If Petersham was as guiltless of treason as I believed, and was free to do so, he'd jump at the chance of clearing himself. On the other hand, if he is being held, the people who helped him to escape might want to——"

Norroy did not finish his sentence, for the door opened just then, and another man entered.

"The only other members of the corps in New York at the present time, chief," said the latter, giving a semi-official salute, "are Ivison James and Stanley Jarboe. Oh, and there's Carson Huntley—fine! As you said you didn't want to connect with the police or the D. J. people, I gave orders for the servants here in the club to be ready at seven-thirty—six of them, including Jules, the librarian, and the bookkeeper, and three of the waiters. You know, it was understood by them when they signed on here that they might be used for 'police' work; we called it that."

"Good! No, I don't want the police or any one but ourselves. I can tell where the leak comes from then. Glad to have *you* with me, Bok. Your magnificent luck——"

"Can't see why you always call it luck, chief," grumbled the newcomer, who, coming into the light, Carson Huntley recognized as John Baedeker Bok, he who had once been called "the youngest and luckiest"

man in the corps. Time had somewhat tamed his shock of unruly, wheat-colored hair, and, just as most of the others who came in the corps young, his attire had become as much a replica of Norroy's as he could compass it.

"Did Petersham answer as you expected?" asked Huntley impatiently. Norroy passed him an envelope upon which the number of a "box" and the name of a newspaper were neatly typed.

The note within it was also typewritten. Carson Huntley took it out, and, receiving a confirmatory nod as to Bok, read it aloud.

There was neither address, date, nor salutation. It read simply:

If you mean what you advertise, come to 67 Van Vhroon Place at eight o'clock to-night. Just walk up the front steps, turn the handle of the door inside the vestibule, and walk in. Door will be unlocked. Sit down and wait. I shall not come in until I am sure no one is following. I have a friend watching one way, I shall be watching the other. When I come in, he will continue to watch outside, and will warn me if any one is coming; and if this is a trap to catch me, you will be fooled; for I will kill myself and take you to hell with me to carry my grip.

If you mean what you say, I can convince you of my absolute innocence, and, more than that, I can tell you things the government ought to know about certain German spies.

The note concluded as abruptly as it began, save that the initials, "C. P.," were scrawled in lead pencil after the above, and in the fashion used by artists and illustrators in signing their pictures. That is to say, the "C. P." was set down in monogram fashion, curved

and jointured, although apparently only two strokes of the pencil had been used.

Huntley discovered and pointed this out as bearing some evidence as to the authenticity of the note. Norroy nodded. He had opened his desk, and was filling his Chinese cigarette case of the ruby-eyed, golden dragons. Bok noted idly that he took a number of cigarettes from the glass-topped, sandalwood box in which they were generally kept in bulk; but only two from another—a curious-looking Russian humidior, the key to which hung on Norroy's chain.

"Must be mighty expensive cigarettes," Baedeker commented as Norroy locked the Russian humidior, replaced it in a locked drawer, and then locked the desk.

"So they are," Norroy agreed, but elucidated no further. He reached for the note, studying it. "Altogether a remarkably clever fake, if it is a fake," he said. "Note the knowledge of psychology displayed; that is, presuming this is *not* written by Petersham——"

"If you have any doubt——" began Huntley, startled.

"Presuming it is not written by Petersham—thank Heaven, I always have doubts, Carson—the curious mood of a hunted, desperate boy is well caught when the writer says if it is a trap he will kill himself and me. Now a less clever faker would have been afraid to say that for fear I would not come. Note also the clever way in which the supposed faker has penetrated my design; knowing it is not Petersham I am after,

but the 'German spies' he promises to tell me about——
Yes, very clever!"

He gazed at it in admiration, whistling the while; then, catching a glimpse of himself in the mirror, and noting that one end of his scarf was slightly out of focus, he frowned at his reflection as he earnestly strove to restore his attire to perfect equilibrium.

"Let it alone, Yorke. Be serious——"

"I am never more serious, Carson, than when engaged in overcoming imperfections of attire. How many times must I tell you that? Man, at best, is so unlovely a creature that if the eye can be deflected from him to his attire, it is every man's duty to array himself in the most becoming fashion possible. Consider the huge, clumsy foot of man, then think of the little, perfectly formed hoof of a deer—an animal weighting twice as much. Consider——"

"Peace, peace!" pleaded Huntley, holding both hands to his ears. "I promise never to do it again. But, Yorke, don't you find it suspicious that the writer of this letter lays so much stress on your coming alone?"

"Wouldn't you if you were Petersham? No, Huntley, the letter is irreproachable. That is its only fault. It is too irreproachable, too calmly considered for possible objections of this sort on my part, and the typing is deliberate and unhurried. The fact that it is typewritten also gives rise to suspicion; knowing as these people must, that I could secure specimens of Petersham's handwriting, they would not dare a note in any other hand. And, as I still cling to my belief

in the boy's innocence, he would not write it for them; that is—if it is a fake."

"But which do you think it is?" asked Huntley in an agony of apprehension. He loved Norroy as one brother sometimes loves another.

"Frankly, Carson," answered Norroy in his most aggravating drawl, "I don't know. It's the sort of letter Petersham ought to write if he saw the advertisement; it also is the sort of letter the very clever man who arranged for Petersham's escape would write if he saw it."

Baedeker Bok had an annoying way of saying, at the right moment, the sort of thing Carson Huntley would have liked to say himself.

"Particularly if they knew who was after them," Bok said, now trying to imitate Norroy's drawl.

"Exactly," agreed Norroy, and arose, for at Jules' discreet knock Carson had opened the door and they had been apprised that their dinner was served.

"It was necessary to have it earlier to-night, you will understand, sir," explained Jules, with a certain added dignity that came from the knowledge that he was to be a partner of the risks "his gentlemen" were to take on this particular night. "But all of us will await your word at seven-thirty, Mr. Norroy. We will wear dark clothes and hats and rubber-soled shoes. Correct, sir?"

Norroy nodded, and the trio followed Jules below. Messieurs Jarboe and James, he told them, had returned home to change their clothes after receiving instructions from Mr. Bok, but would return shortly.

"Which one of us is to go to the house?" asked Huntley presently.

"I, personally, shall follow this particular worm-hole into the rotten tree, even if it means sticking my head in a hornet's nest," returned Norroy, smiling. "The rest of you will have written instructions. Here they are."

He held up a sealed envelope. "And a map of the district," Norroy added. "I scouted around there this afternoon."

"You can't mean to go alone, Yorke," implored Huntley. "You know what a long score Germany has against you, and if there is a leak, and they know who you are, why you'll be playing into their hands. Have you forgotten that if it hadn't been for you Germany would have edged her way into South America? Nor would we have built the Panama Canal if you hadn't nullified their buying up of all the old De Lesseps scrip by——"

Norroy held up his hand.

"At any rate," said Carson desperately, "your presence in any affair spells ill luck for them. You outwitted Von Ladenburg and Ehricke—and killed them. And you know as well as I that if they know you are in on this that they will kill you. For it means that, sooner or later, their beautifully built-up spy system will be shattered. Now you're too important to the country to risk your life just now when your country needs you as she never needed you before." He gulped back something; then, quite simply:

"Let me go, Yorke."

"Remember," laughed Norroy, "that it's probably only poor little Petersham we're suspecting of all these dark possibilities. Not another word until after dinner."

He finished his soup with hearty appetite. Huntley pushed his away untasted. Of the other courses he ate little, but he would have eaten none at all had he heard what Norroy heard when summoned to the telephone for the second time.

The first time it had been his valet who said that some one had rung up and had demanded to speak with Norroy in so peremptory a manner and had warned the valet that it was dangerous for his master not to hear what he had to say, that the man had promised to call Norroy and give him the other's name.

"And what was it, Valentine?"

"Petersham, sir."

"Connect him when he calls again. He said he would?"

"In five minutes, sir."

It was in reality less than that, for Norroy had hardly had time to sit down to the roast and begin to carve when he was summoned back to the booth again. He motioned to Carson to take the knife, but Carson was staring so gloomily into space that he did not see him; so Norroy, smiling affectionately at his friend, gave it to Bok, and, returning, took up the receiver

"You are Petersham?"

"And this is Mr. Norroy? Thank God!"

The boy at the other end of the wire was gasping.

He heeded Norroy's advice to get his breath before speaking again:

"Don't go there to-night, Mr. Norroy. I didn't write that letter. I only heard about it a little while ago when they were getting ready to go over after you. I never heard of you myself, but *they* have, and they mean business. You were right if you thought I wasn't guilty, and I'm going to prove it by coming anywhere you say if it will keep you from going to Van Vhroon Place. If this is a trap to catch me, I'll have to be caught in it, for, Mr. Norroy, I'm too good an American to let a man who seems to terrorize *them* so much lose his life. For God knows what will happen if we go to war—if what I've seen and heard in the last two weeks means what it seems to mean——"

All this in as close to a single breath as the boy could compass it.

"Take your time," advised Norroy kindly.

"But you won't go? I've risked my life to get to this telephone; the man they left behind nearly did for me. And I'm risking my liberty coming to you—but it's better that way than knowing I let you go to your death. You won't go?"

"What time will you be here?"

"As soon as I can. I'm over in Jersey somewhere; I've been running across fields and along roads until I reached the first phone. I'll ask the man here how long it takes to get to New York. I've asked him; about an hour and a half. He's going to hitch up to take me to the train. You'll wait?"

"I will meet you at my apartment in an hour and a half," Norroy promised.

He returned to the dining room, saying nothing to his companions. The arrival of Jarboe and Ivison James, however, put an end to his indecision. He summoned the steward.

"Jules," he said suddenly, "I've changed my plans. Let things stand. Get your men together. We start as soon as we can. Hurry!"

"What was that message on the phone, Yorke?" asked Carson, by no means deceived as to the seriousness Norroy was trying to keep out of his eyes.

"It was from Petersham."

"Then—it's all right?"

"I don't know," answered Norroy sharply; "but I'm going to find out. Ready, everybody? No, let us get our own things, Johnson. You get yours."

He left the club in advance of the others, and alone, despite all protests. But he left behind in the sealed envelope a little sketch of the neighborhood that he had visited that afternoon in disguise. It was a map of six streets. The Van Vhroon Place house was marked by a red star. A corner, a block to the north of it, was marked with a green circle, while for a little French café a block to the south stood a blue star.

Norroy's last instructions, supplementing those written on the map, had been:

"Leave the club one at a time, half of you by the rear entrance. Carson, take Bok, Jules, and two of the waiters, go to the blue-starred place, wait five minutes, then start slowly toward Van Vhroon Place,

the front entrance. Ivison, take Jarboe and the others. Same instructions, save that you go to the green circle and approach the place by the back. Unless you get some reassuring message from me a few minutes after you get there, break in!"

He had hurried out after that, carefully keeping his eyes from meeting the reproachful ones of Carson Huntley.

CHAPTER III

TELLS HOW YORKE NORROY FELL INTO ENEMY ALIEN HANDS AND HOW HE FELL OUT AGAIN

WHEN Norroy alighted from the taxicab that had taken him to Van Vhroon Place, he hesitated before paying the bill. Should he bid the fellow wait? In case of sudden treachery, he might manage to alarm the man outside, who would, in turn, communicate his alarm to Carson's squad, who would have reached the street before the chauffeur could leave it.

He turned and looked at the house. It was dark, save for a dim illumination that percolated through first-floor window curtains and draperies. The fronts of the other houses were far from bright; many had "For Rent" or "Sale" signs in their windows. The street was very quiet. From the East River, that could be seen from its rear windows, came the hoot of a passing tug, the scream of a steamer's siren. Evidently it was foggy out there.

He suddenly blamed himself for not having requisitioned one of the boats of the river police to lie in wait just off the old stone jetty below. It was not that he had not thought of it; only one never knew whom to trust these days, and, fearing an alarm might

reach the enemy, Norroy had relied upon men directly under his own control.

But the moments were passing quickly now. Soon the two squads would start for the house. Nor was this his only precaution. Cursing himself for a coward, he paid the man and ascended the steps, the high brownstone steps of an earlier architecture, when, no doubt, Van Vhroon Place had been the habitat of well-to-do burghesses.

Now! Well, at their worst, these houses could be nothing more than rooming or boarding houses.

He entered the vestibule, the door to which had been left flung wide. He tried the second door. It yielded to a turn of the knob, and so suddenly that Norroy stumbled into a dark hallway.

The only light he could see, above or below, came from what had once been a drawing-room to the right. Before him he could dimly see stairs disappearing in the darkness above. The rear of the hall in which he stood was also shadowed in darkness.

He stepped toward the illumination, a little patch of which filtered through the drawing-room doorway. He entered, but warily.

He was in a room that was quite empty, save for a candle stuck in a bottle on the high mantel of dark-veined marble, and a chair and table somewhere near the center of the room. He remembered that the note had said he was to sit down and wait.

He sat down.

The next second he regretted it. For, quickly as he sprang to his feet and wildly as he clutched for

the sides of the floor, they shot past entirely too rapidly.

It could not have been ten seconds between the time he sat down on the chair and the time he found himself ringed around by hostile faces. He was still sitting in the chair; the chair still stood firmly on the section of floor on which it had stood when he sat on it. But chair and section of floor had both descended to the basement, and their occupant was staring at the square hole in the ceiling through which he had come.

"If you will be so good as to rise so that it can be replaced?"

The man, who spoke with no trace of foreign accent, indicated the hole above and the floor beneath. Norroy bowed and stepped to the basement bricks. Another man, one off somewhere in the darkness, released a lever, and chair and table rose slowly. Where the hole had been was now white ceiling.

Norroy glanced about him, then moved a little farther back, so that his back was to the wall. He was in an ordinary basement room, save that two huge timbers had been placed against the door that opened into the front areaway and the windows had been boarded up. A flight of stairs gave access to the upper regions, and there was a door open at the rear which gave upon another basement room.

Six men were present. He did not doubt, from the prevalence of beards among them, that they were disguised; indeed, once the thought came, the dull lifelessness of their hair was apparent.

Three men, one of whom had released the lever, stood between him and the front entrance. One stood at the stairway, another at the rear door. Each man held an automatic; one half concealing his in his sleeve, another twirling his around his finger; the others in a more usual fashion.

As Norroy took in these details, he noted another—one that, for once, gave him a sharp, sickening pain about his heart. He drew a sudden, quick breath, mastered himself, looked again.

Yes, each automatic was hooded queerly, and Norroy knew what such hoods meant. These automatics were noiseless.

The sixth man, he who had spoken, bore every mark by which the young university-trained—Harvard for preference—professional man is generally known—from the conservatively cut clothes of dark worsted to the tiny “frat” pin on the lower part of his waistcoat. He was distinguished, perhaps, by the fact that his skin was very, very white, his hair very, very dark—blue black, in fact. Had Norroy been a witness of Petersham’s escape from the navy yard, he would have known this man for the second stranger with the department-of-justice badge.

He spoke again:

“Mr. Norroy, we have been warned against you. And I am sorry. But we are engaged in a cause that demands utter sacrifice of personal feeling. Had we lived in other times and met, I am sure we would have been friends. As it is—well, I can only say I am

sorry. Is there any message you wish to leave, verbal or written——”

“Yes,” said Norroy, “if I may——”

“Certainly. Just hold both your hands above your head, please. Now, Adelbert, Kurt, take his weapons away. And hurry! No doubt he has friends coming in a very short while——”

The two men came forward, both from behind. They turned Norroy’s pockets inside out, placing on the table watch, cigarette case, money. But no weapons.

“I have two requests, sir,” said Norroy quietly. “First to leave a last message with you. Second to smoke a cigarette. Have I permission?”

The other nodded. A rough kitchen table was hurriedly thrust forward, a chair pulled up, pen, ink, and paper provided. Norroy sat down, and, opening his cigarette case took therefrom one of the cigarettes Bok had seen him transfer from the locked Russian humidor.

This he lit and inhaled deeply, twice. Then he began to write.

He wrote steadily for a moment; then, picking up the cigarette, inhaled twice again, and twice as deeply. Whereupon, for the second time, he placed it on the edge of the table and picked up his pen.

“You must hurry, Mr. Norroy,” warned the man with the fraternity pin.

Norroy was never to forget those minutes of agony; of never knowing when the patience of his watchers would be exhausted and his death, six times over,

come flying at him noiselessly from out those hooded weapons. So quiet was it he could hear his own breathing and that of the others as well. It seemed hardly credible that these quiet-mannered, harmless-looking men had agreed to fire at a given moment and share the blame of his death between the six of them. Yet it was apparent that this was so.

Their attitudes were rigid. The man with the fraternity pin took out his watch and raised his gun. Norroy looked up. Each of the others had followed his example. They stood statue-like, right arm extended, the hand of each holding toward him the head of that hateful little hood—as poisonous as a cobra's.

"We give you one minute to finish in, Mr. Norroy," said the man, eyes on his watch; then to the others; "When I close my watch, fire!"

Evidently he was counting. Norroy bent over, writing rapidly. But his pen had not finished another line before there was a dull explosion in the center of the room, at the edge of the table where the cigarette lay. Immediately the room began to fill with smoke, sickening smoke—volumes of it.

Before any of the others had recovered themselves, and while the smoke was so thick that friend and foe looked alike, Norroy, who, for all his writing had never taken his eyes from the cigarette, now sprang lightly to the table top, and from there launched himself straight at the stairway. He fell, at the end of his long jump, arms extended. They fastened around

a pair of legs above, and a man hurtled over Norroy's head.

Below the smoke was clearing away. Above came the slam of a door and the shooting of a bolt.

Norroy, in the hallway, laughed breathlessly. Then he ran to the vestibule and blew long and loud on the whistle he carried. In response came whistle blasts from both front and rear, and but a brief time elapsed before the pattering of footsteps culminated in the appearance of Carson in the doorway, behind him John Baedeker Bok.

At the back, the sound of blows on woodwork began.

"Run back, Bok, and let them in—James and his lot. Carson, you and Jules watch that basement entrance. Shoot the first man who tries to come out; don't warn—shoot! Ah, James, you're just in time; take Jarboe back with you and two other men and watch that rear-basement entrance. The rest of you come with me. Who has an extra gun?"

One was pressed into his hand in the darkness.

"Now give me an electric torch, and follow where it leads."

He led the way down the dark hallway to the kitchen. Outside the butler's pantry was a bolted door. Norroy unbolted and stood back of the door as he pulled it open, peering through the crack made by door and jamb.

It was still lighted up below, apparently as before by candles, although the reek of a peculiar smoke whirled into the draft.

"You may as well give up down there," called Norroy. "My men have orders to shoot if you break out front or back. If you surrender quietly, it will be the best for you."

Having waited in vain for any response, Norroy gave the order to advance two by two, each hugging the side of the wall. In this fashion he came into view of the basement room, closely followed by Baedeker Bok. Each held his weapon upraised and ready.

But there was no one to use them on. The room was empty.

"Look for them in the next room," called Norroy, throwing the long, level beam of the electric torch in that direction. It also illumined only emptiness.

Norroy followed the light, the others skirmishing about him. They heard his exclamation of disappointment, and crowded around. He was standing by a small door, like the entrance of a rabbit hutch, that, the light revealed, led to a lower level.

"One of you follow that—quickly. It's no use, though; they've gone. Bok! Hurry up to James and Jarboe and see if you can make out some small craft just leaving the old stone jetty below. If you do, tell them to fire on it," he added when Bok was halfway up the stairs.

Norroy crossed to the center of the first room and picked up the fragments of the cigarette he had lighted when writing his "last message." The paper lay where he had left it, and it read:

Better luck next time, gentlemen. Examine the cigarette that caused the explosion, and you will see we have taken a page out of your book. I trust this will be the "last message" I ever have occasion to write you, as I expect shortly to have the lot of you in jail. That——

It was then that the "smoke powder" especially designed for barrage fire by the Germans, that troops might move forward under a screen of thick smoke, had been reached by the burning tobacco which had formed the other half of the cigarette.

Norroy dropped message and cigarette fragments back to the table as one of his men returned from the passageway with the news that it sloped down sheerly to the river. At the same moment the sound of scattering shots was heard.

"Checkmate," he smiled. "Now to hear what young Petersham has to say."

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH OUR HERO TELLS ABOUT THE "BLACK BOOK"

AFFAIRS were as Norroy supposed them overhead. James and Jarboe's men had taken scattering shots at a little motor boat creeping away in the darkness, but with no apparent effect.

Norroy called off his men, dismissed all save the secret agents, and took those as far as his home, giving them some necessary orders, chiefly that they hold themselves in readiness for the morrow.

"It was my fault," he said as he bade all save Carson good night. "I should have had the river police, too. But I was so afraid the whole plan would be betrayed if I let outsiders in. It's hard to know what to do when fighting such a widespread espionage system. I hope to know more about it later to-night——"

He glanced at his watch; he had still a quarter-hour margin before Petersham would arrive. So that when that young gentleman did, he found Mr. Norroy alone in slippers and velvet jacket, lounging before the fire.

"You may lock up for the night and go to bed, Valentine," said his master. "I may be some little time with this young gentleman. Disconnect the telephone, too. I do not wish to be disturbed until to-

morrow morning. If you were playing a double game," he said to Petersham, "you would find it remarkably easy. I am alone, without a weapon, and cannot phone unless I go to some little trouble. But sit down. And have a drink. You look as though you needed it."

Petersham did. He was not the lad the navy yard knew; far from it. His face was hard and set, and there was a staring look about his eyes that seemed to tell of some horror experienced at no very distant hour. His clothing was disordered, his boots and turned-up trousers muddy, and he wore a piece of silk wound about his neck and secured with a tie pin in place of collar and scarf. One sleeve had a jagged tear along its entire length, and was held in place by a safety pin.

Norroy's eyes rested on these eccentricities of attire as he handed Petersham a glass of steaming punch, compounded from materials at his elbow. The boy noted Norroy's gaze the while he sniffed thirstily at the lemon-peel aroma.

"Drink first," directed Norroy. "Now—cigar—cigarette—— Those are some very special ones of my own. Same tobacco from a sun-kissed wall in Smyrna as a certain Oriental potentate favors. Now——"

"You were noticing my sleeve and collar?" exclaimed Petersham excitedly. "That happened tonight. There was a man left behind, and we fought and rolled the floor and tore at one another's throats until I got the gun on the mantel. Then——"

The look of horror deepened in his eyes.

"I had a right to do it!" he said passionately. "They meant to kill you. Didn't I?"

"Doubtless," agreed Norroy. "But I've yet to hear the whole story. Begin with the time you met the girl who lived at 192½ Sands Street—the daughter of the inventor——"

"Inventor? Bah!" interrupted the boy angrily. "Inventor of lies, yes! And she—— Oh, Mr. Norroy, you wouldn't believe she could do such things if you saw her. She——"

"I understand."

"No, you don't! I was in love with her. I'd never met a girl like that before. You see, I've done nothing but work—work—work—and think of getting ahead so that I'd have a comfortable home for mother and me. Then Hilda came along——"

"I suppose she arranged some accident?"

"Yes; I see that now. She dropped her purse, and I ran a block to catch her. Somehow I found out she was a stranger and friendless, and that she and her father were in much the same fix as mother and I. So I took her straight home to my mother that very afternoon, that she wouldn't think I thought any the less of her because she'd let me know her informally. I was so sure she was sweet and good."

He paused, for his voice had a dangerous tremor in it.

"Mr. Norroy, isn't it possible they roped *her* into it just as they roped me? If you could have seen her——"

"I have seen many of—just that kind, my boy."

In the silence that followed, Norroy saw the boy's hands clench. But they unclenched again, as with a hopeless gesture Petersham went on, answering his own question:

"I suppose not. But when mother was taken sick she nursed her—oh, so tenderly! Still—— Well, anyhow, my thoughts about that home for mother and me had some additions that afternoon—just as the proposed house had. There was to be one little wing for old Mr. L'Estrange, her father—Heaven knows what his name really is!—and another for my mother, and the middle part was for Hilda and me. I was dreadfully in earnest about all this; you have no idea. And Hilda was so sweet when she told me she'd wait for me, no matter how long, for I was the only one. You see, I'd explained to her that when I passed the examination for assistant constructor I'd probably be sent far away somewhere and that we couldn't afford to marry except on a junior lieutenant's pay; it's ruin for an ensign to try it. I told you she was *so* sweet. Said mother should live with them until I came back.

"Then one day she came to me all smiles. Her father's invention was practically accepted. That meant enormous royalties, and we could get married, anyhow—even on an ensign's pay. After a few days her face was as long as could be when she met me. There was one fault to the invention. That must be overcome or the thing was a failure.

"I suppose you know by this time that it was a sea plane that could be released from a submarine—or

maybe you don't. The only fault to this invention of his was the question of compactness. Now, I had just been given some data by the constructor as to how spare submarine parts could be stowed away in the mother ship; one of those huge submersibles such as Germany sent across this year—the *Bremen*, for instance. The mother ship was to carry extra vital parts. And the question of compactness had come up. Well, after I'd drawn plan after plan for the constructor, he finally got what he wanted and told me to make an extra large-sized drawing.

"There's no use my explaining the system, is there?"

"Keep your mouth shut about it—or anything like it—from now on," advised Norroy.

"Well, you see my situation. If Hilda hadn't been so outspoken in her hatred for Germany. And her father, too. His one idea was to produce something that would *hurt* the kaiser's chances. They talked a lot about how they and other Lorrainers had been treated since the war began because of their sympathy for France. They claimed to come from Alsace-Lorraine, you see, and I knew all about that situation—or thought I did. Well, it's hard to explain maybe to a man who isn't in love, but——"

"I suppose they convinced you that they wanted to help the Allies beat Germany, and that this invention was to be sold to an Allied agent here. And that as the United States would soon be at war with Germany, anyhow, it was your patriotic duty to help. And since it also meant you could marry the girl——"

"But I assure you, sir, the personal part alone would never have been enough," said Petersham earnestly. "And it was so small a detail—or seemed to be. Well, I made Hilda promise that the invention should be offered to the United States also, and that the Allies must share it with us. She swore to do so, and so did her father. And so I gave them a tracing. That is all," he finished wearily. "The very next day they tried to arrest me, and the admiral wouldn't listen to me, and I went wild with rage at the whole world——"

"What happened after you escaped?"

The boy's face lit up, although wanly. "Yes, of course," he said. Then, as he gathered his thoughts, his natural, youthful enthusiasm reasserted itself. "It may not be such a bad thing, after all—that is for the United States—although I'm finished, done for, look at it any way you like. But I'll have my revenge on them, the cowardly, sneaking rascals, to get at a man through a girl, and through his hating the cruel way they made war themselves—and—well, through everything that was decent."

He brooded a moment. "You know, sometimes, Mr. Norroy, considering everything, I don't believe it was that tracing I gave them half as much as it was *me* they were after. I've had two weeks to think everything over in, and, stop to think of it, that tracing wasn't so very valuable. Almost any good naval constructor could have figured it out in time. Every nation has got to figure it out. Why, I myself made some slight suggestions that the constructor embodied

in the idea, and I'm not even a naval constructor yet. I would have been if it hadn't been for this, but that's all over. No, it wasn't that problem of compactness they wanted half as much as they wanted me."

"It would look that way, since they mailed the original tracing, knowing all the time their house was watched," agreed Norroy. "If they didn't know, why did they decamp that very night—why did they arrange for that escape of yours? It looks as if they wanted first to discredit you, then to use you."

"That was just it," answered the boy gloomily. "You see, I was the constructor's own private draftsman, almost like a girl there was his private secretary. I knew every plan for every new thing that has come up in the past year, and most of the new things *have* come up in that time in the way of naval warfare—and almost every new thing had to pass through the construction and repair department of the New York navy yard. Look at the stuff I could have given them! And how I could have checked up on all the other stuff they managed to get. They knew my record, just as they seem to know everything, and they knew mighty few young draftsmen get recommended for naval-constructor exams. after a year's service. But what's the good of talking about what's past!"

He made a little despairing gesture.

"Lots of use," answered Norroy. "You help me and I'll help you. My job is to get the men at the head of the infernal system that tried to ruin you. And I'm going to stay on the job until I do."

Norroy stood, arms folded, watching the boy keenly.

Also he glanced toward the slightly open door. Peter-sham did not notice. He was too much occupied by a thought that, to judge from the sudden light in his eyes, was a pleasant one.

"Count on me to help you," he said quickly. "And I *can* help you. Although they blindfolded me before they took me to the house I'm going to tell you about, they were foolish enough to leave one of the window blinds up, and the one glance I got gave me my bearings. Look here——"

Taking a pencil from his pocket, he ran across to the writing table, and, under the shaded light, began to draw on a piece of Norroy's crested paper.

"Here's Central Park," he said, and began drawing the north side of it and the great avenues that met it. His pencil traced the course of two of these farther northward. Then he blocked in a little square.

"I forget the name of this place," he said as he sketched, "but I've seen it often, been in it often, because I lived north of the park when I was a kid, and used to take a short cut to school through this very same little square. The house we want is on the north side, and is somewhere in the center of the block. It isn't an apartment house, and it must be a double front, because there were doors on both sides of the hallway. It seems to me that it must be easy to locate a house like that."

He handed the drawing to Norroy. "What happened?" asked the recipient.

"They took me there by some roundabout route. I think it was through Jamaica and back to New York

over the Queensborough Bridge. They stopped somewhere on the road—they bound my eyes then so I wouldn't see where—and exchanged their roadster for a limousine, and got me a piffling disguise. They never took the bandage from my eyes until we were inside this house on this square I'm telling you about. Then the man who unbandaged me—the one who had ridden the horse I got away on——”

“What sort of a looking man?” asked Norroy.

The boy told him. Norroy nodded, and told him to go on.

“This man told me not to be afraid; that I was among friends who knew how to reward *their* friends. He left me with the others, and went upstairs. Pretty soon I was sent for.

“In a big room on the top floor—in fact, it looked like the only room—there was a man sitting at a desk. One look at him frightened me stiff. And I'm not easily frightened, either. He was writing, and he told me to wait. I looked around the room. Its walls were just lined with file boxes, and a big safe near the desk, where the man was writing, was open, showing rows and rows of iron compartments stuffed with paper, and a half-open drawer with piled-up rouleaux of gold and packages of bank notes in neat piles.

“I don't know what it was frightened me about this man. I guess it was the look he shot at me when I came in; for when he bent over his writing all I could see was brown hair and a brown beard cut to a point. And when he looked up and smiled at me

he had two rows of nice white teeth. This time his eyes did not seem so terrible.

"Well, he sat there, telling me about how his country would protect me, since I had helped her—that she never forgot her friends. He went on to say they had the greatest surgeons in the world in Germany, and that my face could be so altered by them—without pain—that when I grew a mustache and beard I could come back to America and they'd have an identity for me to assume. And so forth and so forth. I was to have all the money I wanted, and——"

The boy paused and drew a deep breath.

"Just at that moment he pressed a bell button, the door flew open, and there stood—Hilda!

"‘I had to do it,’ she said, ‘but that part about caring for you wasn’t pretending.’"

"‘What must I do in return for all this?’ I asked the brown-bearded man at the desk. Although whether that beard and mustache were real, I couldn’t say.

"‘First you write your name in this book,’ he answered, and he unlocked the strong box of the safe and took out a big, black book. ‘There are plenty of your fellow countrymen there,’ he added; ‘take a look if you don’t believe me.’"

"I did. And, Mr. Norroy, that book is full of the names and addresses of people right here in New York, in Chicago—even more in Chicago—in Baltimore, San Francisco—every city in the union.

"‘And after I sign my name, what?’ I asked him.

“‘Why, then,’ he answered, smiling in a funny way, ‘you just do as you’re told, that’s all.’

“Hilda had come up behind me, and caught hold of my hand. I don’t know what gave me the courage to refuse—I love Hilda, and, oh, how I wanted her!—but I *did* refuse, and then the man’s anger was something terrible. Not that he showed anything, but his eyes just blazed. I felt like I was shriveling up.

“He told Hilda to get out as if she were some stray dog, and she went without a word. Then the man he rang for came in—the one who had brought me up—and the big man at the desk said: ‘Take him where he’ll be glad to come to his senses.’

“They blindfolded me and took me to that place in Jersey—away out in the woods somewhere; I could never find *that* again. I’ve been there ever since until to-night. I’d gone to bed early, and was fast asleep in a room with barred windows at the top of the house when somebody came ringing and knocking at the front door.

“I lay still, as if I was still asleep, and that was how I came to hear what they planned to do with you, for the man in charge—the same one—came upstairs and came over and listened to my breathing and said to the man watching me: ‘He’s all right. Come on down. Messenger from New York.’

“After they’d gone downstairs to the dining room, I crept down after them, and, halfway up on the stairs, I heard all about the advertisement and everything. The big man in New York had sent you the note, Mr. Norroy, and had prepared the place and had a boat

waiting outside a secret tunnel under the house that they were to escape by in case you came with anybody else. But since he—the man in charge over in Jersey—had begun this thing, the messenger said, he could finish it.

“They began to draw lots to see who was to stay and watch me, and I hurried back upstairs and got into bed again. After the others went, well”—the boy shuddered again—“I told you how we struggled—and what happened——”

Petersham closed his eyes as if to keep out the sight that rose before them. Then he took an automatic from his pocket and pushed it away, his look of horror returning. Norroy clapped his shoulder, then put an arm about him.

“You played your part like a man, after that initial foolishness,” said the secret agent. “And if you’ll help me I’ll guarantee you’ll be glad this happened. But, first, your mother——”

“She died in the hospital; died without recovering consciousness after the operation,” said the boy, his tones broken. His eyes suddenly brimmed over. “I had such dreams,” he sobbed. “Now—everything’s gone—everything I loved—gone!”

“Except your country,” Norroy reminded him gently. “You love your country, don’t you, Petersham? You realize the menace of the system that nearly made you a traitor? You know that, sooner or later, war must come, and first we must root out this treason with which the country is honeycombed. The first step toward that end is to get that Black

Book. That will tell us who the traitors are. Think what it would mean if it was through you that book came into our hands—the honor, the——”

“I don’t care anything about that now,” answered the boy, looking up, suddenly stern. “But, as you say, I’ve only got my country now. So I’ll do whatever you say.”

“Right!” agreed Norroy cheerfully. “We’ll have a drink on that. Oh, by the way, Carson, you can come out now. Come out and meet the newest member of the corps—Mr. Charles Petersham.”

And Carson Huntley, pocketing his automatic with which he had been keeping guard behind the slightly open door, came into the firelight in time to drink the toast:

“Until the Black Book is in our hands,” said Norroy, and all three clinked their glasses.

BOOK TWO

AN ENEMY TO THE EMPEROR

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH ULRIC ULM BECOMES ULRICH VON UHLM AGAIN

UP to the age of twenty-three, that young gentleman who had been born Von Uhlm and christened Ulrich, had suspected himself to be a square peg in a world of round holes.

At the beginning of the winter of 1916 he would have sworn that he was of all pegs the squarest, and that all of the world's holes were of the roundest. So much was this issue the case that our young gentleman found himself in the lamentable necessity of wearing a trail between his lodging house and the nearest pawnbroker's—a trail that, had it not been disturbed by those of others in that overpopulated district, would have been big and broad enough for an Indian papoose to follow.

On a certain night in December, when Ulric—he had elided the aspirate, as you will hear—had returned from the temporarily avuncular relatives for the last time—for he had now nothing more to pawn—he discovered that the room across the hall from him had acquired a habitant, which was the last and cruelest hind kick of fate. This room was the best in the

house. It overlooked the little square outside and was furthermore provided with a huge fireplace. Here Ulric, whose hall room was the smallest and the coldest, had been permitted squatter's sovereignty during the room's lack of more profitable occupancy. For Ulric was what the landlady called "handsome, poor boy," and she was somewhat sorely smitten of conscience concerning him, for his hall room, having once been a linen room, was unprovided with heat of any sort, nor was there any way of heating it.

So Ulric had been permitted to draw his table close to the window overlooking the square; or, on more inclement days, close to the wood fire which his purse had as yet never been too slender to afford. For Ulric was a dreamer, who had yet to make his dreams, when put on paper, pay for sleeping place and provender; and wood fires that crackled and sputtered or gleamed and glowed were mighty encouragers of dreams; and deep down in the glowing, red heart of the fire he had always been able to see his dreams come true.

But it seemed the fire had lied. For, shorn of his last pawnable object, and now having no place in which he could write down his dreams in the hope that some editor some day would see in him a future Balzac or De Maupassant, how could he be expected to succeed? Or even to live?

Ulric gazed sadly at the stranger who was about to enter the room, then approached him, hat in hand.

"There are a few manuscripts of mine in a drawer of the desk in there," he said gloomily. "If you will permit me, I will remove them."

The stranger looked shabby enough, shabbier indeed than Ulric, but extremely clean and neat. His stare, suddenly shifted to the youth, caused Ulric first to stammer, then to look away, for it was a peculiarly disquieting stare. In the single second when the owner so silently scrutinized him, our young gentleman felt as if he were naked, and that the stranger had suddenly become aware of every discreditable thing in his past. Not that there was, strictly speaking, any such. But Ulric felt as though there were. Ulric even felt that the stranger was suspicious of what he said, and might think this was but an excuse to gain admittance to his room for some sinister reason.

Such was the effect of the stranger's stare that Ulric felt like an alien in an enemy land who hastens to unearth his passport.

"My name," he said, almost timidly, "is Ulric Ulm. This little room is mine, but the landlady lets me write in there—in your room. I am a writer, you see. That was, so to speak, my office."

He smiled wanly over what had seemed an excellent jest when permission to use the room had first been granted. But he took heart when he saw that the stranger was observing him favorably. In fact, Ulric felt that the stranger had an unaccountable desire to know him better.

"Your name is——"

Ulric repeated three of the four syllables. "Ulric Ulm," he said.

"German?"

Ulric indignantly denied it.

"I'm an American," he said.

"German descent, though, aren't you?"

"Not in the sense you mean. Not Prussian. My people come from Saxony, and my grandfather was one of those who rebelled against the Prussianizing of Germany way back in 1848. He was a friend of Carl Schurz and Franz Sigel and Rosecrans—all that bunch hated Prussia as bad as the Belgians do to-day——"

He stopped short suddenly. "God knows why I'm running on like this about my family," he said, with the same wan smile as before. "But the word 'German' means such a hateful thing to-day that I want to disown it. My father and his people—the people of his day in Saxony—were *not* Germans; not in the sense it is used to-day. No, and they were not socialists—in the sense it is used to-day, either. I was a socialist until the German socialists went back on everything they were pledged to do. After this war, maybe I'll be a socialist again—a real socialist. But we won't call ourselves 'socialists.' The name will be too soiled after the uses to which it's been put. Of course I'm very young and maybe I've no right to judge——"

Again he checked himself, and this time he blushed. He did not need tell anybody he was very young.

"There I go—running on again," he faltered. "I'll—I'll just get those manuscripts, if you don't mind——"

The stranger opened the door and motioned Ulric inside. The youth made toward the desk, and, ask-

ing permission, opened a drawer and took out two folded manuscripts.

"I guess I'd better have left them," he said bitterly. "They'd save me something in stamps if they were lost."

The stranger held out his hand for them. With the eagerness of the young writer to have his work read, Ulric obeyed.

"If you'd like to look them over and tell me what you think of them——"

"Typewritten, eh?" interrupted the stranger, and looked around the room as if in search of something. Ulric shook his head.

"They came and took the typewriter because I owed two months' rent," he admitted frankly.

"Sit down, won't you?" asked the other. "I'd like to look over these. And, by the way, will you have dinner with me? I understand from the good lady here that one can have all sorts of things served in one's room."

Ulric eagerly acquiesced. He was very hungry—he was always very hungry nowadays—and the landlady never failed to have a joint of some sort every evening—a joint in the good old English fashion, with plenty of gravy and roast potatoes. He told the stranger so, his mouth watering and his eyes moist with hunger. For his purse had not run to the purchase of such fare for many a day.

"And she has rolypoly pudding to-night," he added, as if this must clinch his host's intention of eating indoors. "It's a breath of good old London, one of

those dinners of hers. Everybody eats here who can afford it. I used to."

"Well, suppose you run downstairs and order dinner for two," suggested this amazing stranger. "Meanwhile, I'll look over these. I may be able to help you get them published——"

But when the delighted youth had gone, the stranger went about his examination of the manuscripts in a most peculiar way, turning over each page entirely too rapidly to read more than a few words of each.

"Very excellent typewriting," he murmured. But then, despite his hasty survey of the pages, a phrase caught and held him. He read on—a sentence, a paragraph. Then he looked up.

"God is certainly good," so ran his thoughts. "The boy has a German name and hates Germany. If I doubted his words, this story is enough to prove it."

For the story in question was a war story, shockingly inaccurate as to its descriptions of things military, also of the topography of its locale, Belgium, and the nature and the appearance of its inhabitants—both incredibly idealized. But it so breathed a certain passionate hatred for the wrongs done that unhappy country and her people that passages in it were uplifted beyond writing in ordinary; showed, in fact, that the writer thereof had both the soul of a poet and an intermittent ability to express himself accordingly.

The stranger looked up again. "A German and hates Germany. A socialist and has renounced socialism. Has a German name. Can typewrite and use good English. It looks as though accident had thrown

in your way a better tool than you could forge, Yorke Norroy."

Again one interprets the stranger's thoughts as he stared upward at the old, frescoed ceiling of a house of yesteryear. To those familiar with the Yorke Norroy of the clubs and the cotillions, there was little in this stranger to give him the right to think of himself by that name. But to one of his particular co-workers and cronies of the St. Anthony Club, accustomed to the knowledge that Mr. Norroy was oftener in disguise than out of it, his identification would have been easy; for Norroy had made less attempt to alter his person than his class. The wig he wore gave him the sort of unfashionable hair cut seen on small workmen; his clothes were of a clumsy, woodenish cut that made their wearer seem a foreigner of the lower middle class; and his "madeup" bow of a necktie assisted in this impression, as did his thickish, ragged mustache and scrap of shapeless beard. These latter details destroyed that clean-cut look of his that seemed to show each feature sharply etched, just as the baggy garments disguised the slenderness and grace of his figure; while the application of one of his own preparations for the face gave his complexion that muddiness which comes from improper food and not too much of that.

So that when he let his eyelids droop over his too-expressive eyes—as he did not do in the case of Ulric Ulm—there was little of the old Yorke Norroy for any one save perhaps Carson Huntley and one or two others extremely intimate to identify.

A light went up in the house opposite, and Norroy

abandoned his efforts in literary encouragement to close the inner shutters of his room, being careful, however, not to lower the curtain. From between the shutter and window frame he observed that the light opposite emanated from the third-floor window. He leaned back, and, turning down the wick of his student's lamp, blew out the light, leaving the room in the firelight. Hence, from his darkness, he could observe something of the appearance of the third-floor room across the street; for he had taken a pair of night glasses from his pocket and was rapidly adjusting them.

The curtains were not entirely drawn on the room under observation, and, as Norroy's room was on a somewhat lower level, he could look up and under the half-drawn shades. But the room being lighted only by a desk lamp of some sort, the space to the right and left of the desk were in shadow. Still Norroy could make out shelves of some sort on the walls next to each window, and he fancied he could see those shelves covered by file boxes. But whether this was because he had been informed that the shelves of the room he was seeking were so covered, he could not be sure.

The man at the desk was no easier identified. That he must be of considerable bulk was manifest, for his shadow blocked out much of the light on either side; indeed, it almost hid the desk entirely. So, while he sat with his back to the window, there was no more information to be gained concerning him.

Now a shadow fell across the lighted space remain-

ing to the left, and another figure was to be observed in approach. But before he had come nearer, the man at the desk whirled around in what was apparently a revolving chair and snapped down the window blind.

Even in that brief space, Norroy could make out a bearded face. But while watching that window so intently he momentarily overlooked the other, and when he turned his eyes to rectify this he saw only a faint illumination percolating through an opaque curtain. Even this was soon denied him. Heavy portières, or inner shutters like his own, interposed to shut off further display of light.

So that when Ulric Ulm returned, he found Norroy in profound meditation over his manuscripts. Fearing lest he disturb one so happily occupied, Ulric sat down gingerly on the edge of a chair, his state of mind being, so to speak, seated in the same precarious state. Presently Norroy looked up.

"You can write, my boy, only why will you write about things you know nothing about? I'll guarantee, if these stories dealt with subjects with which you were familiar, that the editors would find pleasure in sending you checks. But, pardon me, you know nothing of the army, less about modern warfare, and, if possible, less yet about Belgium. So why write about such things?"

"Why, sir," answered the boy unhappily, "they seem to be the only subjects worth writing about. And since I can't go over there and fight for poor little Belgium, the next best thing seemed to be to write for her. I

tried to get taken on as a soldier to be sent across; I even went up to Canada to try to get taken on; but you see I wear eyeglasses and can't do without them, and they wouldn't enlist me. Maybe they might if I'd really been a Canadian, but they seem to be sore on us Americans up there. Think we ought to be fighting Germany ourselves. And so we ought. So we ought! It's a shame we aren't. Don't you think so?"

"Strange talk from a man with your name, Mr. von Uhlm," said Norroy, smiling. "Why——"

"*'Ulm,'* not *'Von Uhlm,'*" interrupted the owner of that name hotly. "I chopped the *'von'* off the day I heard about those Belgian massacres—and worse—for fear people would think I belonged to such people. And I chopped the *'h'* from both *'Uhlm'* and *'Ulrich'* and made it *'Ulric'*—Ulric Ulm, that's all. Anyhow, even though I still maintain that the Saxons like my grandfather and the kind of people he knew—the southern Germans—aren't a bit like these Prussians, and though I'm proud to have had a grandfather like mine and proud of lots of other Saxon ancestors, I'm really only one-quarter a Saxon, even. My grandfather married a Southern woman, who nursed him back to life in the period of the Civil War, and he settled down among her kin, and my father married there, too. So I'm more of a Southerner than I am a Saxon, don't you think?"

Norroy studied him gravely, but the dinner arriving at this instant put an end to further conversation. He could see the boy was half starved, and, what was nearly as bad, wholly starved for good food such as

Mrs. Horrocks, the landlady, served. For she herself brought up the shining platters, which, their bright metal covers lifted, revealed rare roast beef and potatoes browned with the meat, while one remaining covered promised further delectables. To the tune of the foaming of the English ale in the tankards, this was speedily dispatched, mostly by young Mr. Ulm. And after his dessert and coffee, he leaned back, a new man.

"Do you want to eat a meal like that every night, and have a few coins left to jingle in your pocket?" Norroy asked suddenly.

Ulric Ulm looked at him reproachfully.

"I see that you do. Good!" Norroy reached into his pocket, brought out a roll of bills, peeled off several of a yellow hue, and handed them over.

"To-morrow or next day," he said, "there will be held a special civil-service examination for typewriting clerk. You will receive notice of it. I want you to take that examination and pass it, and I will guarantee your appointment. Once you are appointed, we will see if all these fine sentiments you've been expressing bear any fruit. But, mind you, no disguising of your name. Write it out fully, Ulrich von Uhlm, and state you are of German American parentage, although born here and an American citizen. Understand?"

Ulm nodded blankly. "But I don't want any one to think I'm a German—in the sense of—well, you know."

"Don't you?" said Norroy sharply. "Well, *I* do."

Ulm's blank look gradually disappeared. His eyes became speculative.

"Special civil-service examination—you guarantee an appointment—fine sentiments bear fine fruit——"

His eyes suddenly lit up.

"You don't mean that you—that I've been so fortunate as to——"

"You know all you need to know until after you've taken that examination and been appointed."

"To what?"

"You will know that in good time, too. Now please forget that we have ever talked on any such subject. If any one asks about me, I'm a printer out of a job—a sort of a German, but an American citizen like yourself, named Brinkerhof—Henry Brinkerhof—a southern German, too, not in sympathy with Prussianism."

Doubt crept into the boy's eyes. "But you aren't?" he asked. And as Norroy failed to answer, the doubt became almost a menace: "Mind you, I meant what I said. If you've got anything to do with these German propagandists over here, count me out. I've been approached by them before, especially when they knew I was a socialist."

"But you haven't declared yourself?" asked Norroy quickly. "Lord! Don't tell me you've gone on record with any of the things you've said to me——"

"No, I haven't," Ulm answered reluctantly, "because they were older men than myself, and most of them belonged to a German singing society of which my granddad was leader. So I had to decline re-

spectfully. You see, I only left my home down South to go north to Canada to enlist, and when they refused me I came to New York to write. I thought I could. They thought so, too, down South——”

“The only trouble is, you’ve had nothing to write about,” interposed Norroy, smiling. “Well, youngster, I’ll guarantee that won’t be the case if you follow my instructions and don’t ask questions. And don’t answer any, either,” he added, rising and holding out his hand. “I will see you after the examination, youngster, and until then go on using this room. Finding you has altered my plans somewhat.”

So saying, he got into hat and coat and went his way. Nor was this shabby fellow, who used the servants’ entrance to an apartment building many blocks to the south of Ulric’s abode, and who crossed by a subterranean passage which ran under an entire block of buildings to the apartment house which was Norroy’s legal residence, seen by a man in the shadows—one of those who watched night and day that they might report the goings and comings of Yorke Norroy to that very man who had sat with his back to the window in the third story of the house opposite that of Mrs. Horrocks, where Ulric Ulm still sat in deep perplexity.

But when Norroy emerged, impeccable in evening dress, with newly ironed silk hat and shoes that matched it in the depth of their inky gloss—as black as his gloves were white—the man in the shadows opposite took up the trail that was to lead nowhere at all, so far as his ends were concerned.

Opportunities, as it is said, come to all; but it is only to the chosen few that it is given to recognize Opportunity if she wears even the flimsiest of veils. To most men in Norroy's position, the meeting with Ulric Ulm would have been a forgotten incident after the boy's manuscripts had been retrieved; but to Yorke Norroy, ever on the alert to waylay Opportunity, the mere fact that this youth had a German-sounding name was enough for investigation.

With the result that his plans for obtaining the Black Book were very materially altered and improved.

CHAPTER II

TELLS ABOUT THE CATACOMBS OF MANHATTAN ISLE

IT was nearly a month later when the St. Anthony Club prepared to welcome a new member. During this time, Charles Petersham, whose disgrace by the hand of the German spy system was almost as recent as his admission into the corps of secret agents, whose meeting place the St. Anthony Club was, chafed under inaction. True, he had employed the time profitably in learning by heart the code system used by that corps; for in such troublous days as these Yorke Norroy had decided that all code books were to be destroyed lest they fall into enemy hands. But first he changed the code, to insure the entire uselessness of such books as remained in existence despite his edict; and, summoning to New York all those subject to his orders, bade them give a week of their time to committing the new code to memory.

Knowing as he did that any code is decipherable if code experts have any number of messages in it to go by, he did not put too great a task on his subordinates by making the new code too complex. Only two copies of the code were kept for the instruction of agents out of reach, and these lay behind steel and

concrete doors equipped with both letter and number combinations, and further protected by a time-lock device. One safe was at the St. Anthony Club and could be opened only by Norroy; the other was the innermost of inner safes in the State, War, and Navy Building and could be opened only by the secretary of state himself.

There were many besides Petersham who were annoyed by the inaction of that month; especially with bombing outrages, "mysterious" fires that destroyed ammunition and supplies intended for the Allies, and ample proof that, despite the utmost secrecy, the sailing dates of ships had been learned somehow, as well as their ports of destination, and the courses they intended to take. This must be true, since all traces of many such ships were lost before they could reasonably be supposed to be out of touch by wireless—and the Allies were never to see them.

And just what poison was at work, as in the case of Petersham, used with intent to discover military and naval secrets, none could know—until too late

Yet Yorke Norroy held his hand. It was exceedingly unlike him, Carson Huntley thought. But Huntley alone of all the malcontents knew that Norroy's way was best, no matter how obviously wrong it might seem.

"Let the department of justice and the secret service look after these individual outrages," Norroy had explained, at the beginning of his inaction. "Let them follow up single clues and get the individuals separately responsible, if they can. And they are doing it

indifferently well. As for us, when we strike it must be at the root of the system. To give them any idea that we know as much as we do means the breaking up of their present system, and its speedy reorganization elsewhere. We want to strike as lightning strikes, not only stripping off the branches of the tree, but killing its roots so that it cannot grow again."

"But sometimes lightning misses the roots," objected the sulky Baedeker Bok, the most unruly of all the agitators against what he called Norroy's "arrogance."

"Not when the bolt is aimed at them," was Norroy's imperturbable answer. "And that is what takes time—forging and aiming the bolt. You will learn all about it at the right time."

"But haven't we located this nest of spies?" asked Henry Ivison James, familiarly known as "H. I. J." James was an army officer, as well as a secret agent—officially he was attached to a Washington bureau. But the card-index system in use in the Chief Clerk's office recorded him "detached for special service" and the card was old and the typing faded. Respect for discipline had been implanted in him at West Point, fostered during service in Porto Rico and the Philippines. It was seldom he questioned the fiat of his superior officer. But now he did. So Norroy thought it best to extend his explanation.

"Not only have we located them, but I have rented a room exactly opposite and have seen sitting at his desk the very man Petersham has described to us and who undoubtedly is the head and shoulders of the

organization. One shot from this little weapon we all carry"—and Norroy touched the space under his left arm where swung by an arm holster the long, thin, rodlike weapon, operated by compressed air and shooting long, thin, steel-jacketed bullets almost noiselessly—"and that would have been the end of Monsieur the Spy. But——"

"Yes——" urged several voices.

"But another spy would have speedily taken his place, and the work would have gone on," answered Norroy quietly.

"But an organized arrest—the house surrounded front and back," suggested the sulky Baedeker Bok. "If we let them alone long enough, we're liable to lose them any day. If we surround the house——"

Norroy seemed very busy over a spot of ink in ill keeping with an otherwise immaculate forefinger.

"How so? Weren't you along the night we tried that very thing at Van Vhroon Place? How many prisoners did we take? Not one! Well?"

Norroy returned to the elimination of the ink spot. As he sat there, absorbed in so minor a matter, and attired in dress clothes of so exquisite a cut, with the light from the Barye bronze desk lamp glinting on jeweled studs set between two tiny ruffles in the center of pleats of fine lawn—studs that matched waistcoat buttons and cuff links and were the *dernier cri* of the Rue de la Paix in such styles, just as the curve of his dress waistcoat and coat showed them to be the last word Cork Street or Saville Row had to say on such subjects—one would have been par-

doned for believing him to be one of those men whose obituaries are chiefly composed of a list of their clubs; men, who, although they attend every ball and important dinner dance of the season, always do so with a look of boredom that says: "Only this sort of thing stands between me and suicide."

But the lackadaisical airs and languid manner that were a part of this pose often irritated beyond reason the younger members of the corps.

"That Von Vhroon place gave onto the river," said the still-objecting Baedeker Bok. "And——"

"And how do we know what this Van Corlear Park house gives 'onto?'" asked Norroy, who, having eliminated the ink spot, had taken up a tiny silver-mounted buffer and was coaxing to the surface the pristine pink of his almond-shaped finger nails. "It is true we have operated so little in New York City that hitherto this place has been merely a headquarters for agents on the way to Europe and back to Washington, so all of you have my forgiveness for knowing so little about New York City. Don't you realize that underneath this island of Manhattan is probably the vastest system of catacombs in the world? The catacombs of Rome and the Paris of Eugène Sue are simply nothing to it. First there are the subways that run under the entire city, with so many outlets here, there, and everywhere that a map of them reveals untold possibilities. When men are at work on the tracks, do you suppose they climb down from the stations and risk falling on their faces on the third rail? Look here!"

His long, thin fingers had been moving as swiftly as white butterflies as he talked. Now he spread a map on the desk before him—for this interview the malcontents had sought him out in the St. Anthony Club's "private library" which was in reality his private office—and the others crowded around him. All but Carson Huntley, who, as Norroy's "left hand," had already seen the map.

"Before the engineers began the construction of the new Seventh Avenue subway, which will require several more years to finish, they, with the assistance of the ordnance-office mapmakers, made this interesting exhibit in order to discover where they could cut through without shaking the foundations of houses already undermined by vaults of various descriptions—wine vaults, cold-storage vaults, and so forth. Also the subterranean arrangements of the vast blocks of apartment houses and hotels. Do you realize that in one part of New York, near Riverside Drive, you can walk nearly seven blocks without putting your head above ground—and not in the subway, either? This is because New York's real estate is owned in blocks. One of the vast estates like the Astors' or the Vanderbilts' will cover twenty or thirty blocks from river to river sometimes. You see, when apartment houses and hotels were erected on these sites, more or less at the same time during New York's first big spurt of building such places, it was found most expedient, since so many water pipes and gas pipes must run to the same central meters, to lay these pipes in tunnels that were easily reached from the cellars,

rather than so close to the ground that they could be entered by manholes from the street. Especially was this so in the case of hotels and big apartment houses where the freezing of a central water pipe, or a leak in a gas main, means discomfiture to so many."

He paused to light one of his long, thin cigarettes, the paper tube of each stamped with the Norroy crest and his initials—another part of the pose that had become natural, as had the use of the elaborate cigarette case bearing the ruby-eyed golden double dragon of the Chinese royal family, a gift bestowed when the dowager empress still ruled her four hundred millions of Chinese.

The others were looking in amazement at the interminable number of interlacing red lines that ran underneath each thick black line that represented a public highway.

"And this tangle here?" asked Ivison James, pointing to the lower part of the map.

"Oh, that's all that remains of old New York. They began to dig some of those cellars when our ill-smelling Bowery was the sweet-scented Bouwerie—in other words, when Walter the Doubter and Peter Stuyvesant were the high mightinesses of the East India Company and ruled the Dutch over here who were in constant terror of Indian attacks and dug deep cellars to keep their valuables in and as hiding places for the women and children. They were dug deeper during Revolutionary days, when Continental spies had to be kept and fed during British occupation of the city. And since a great proportion of the

wealth of the world centers around Wall Street and Maiden Lane, these old cellars have been converted into extensive vaults—strong rooms—for valuables. Believe me, a very neat brochure could be written about the subterranean regions of New York, my boys. Why, the very apartment house in which I live has a subcellar that zig-zags its way under two other buildings, both owned by the same estate, and comes out on the street to the north of it, where another apartment entrance is located—all this because both apartment houses and both office buildings are heated by the same great furnaces and it is a cheaper and better way to heat the buildings. In fact, I made sure of this before I took the apartment when I found that I must be in New York long enough to warrant a residence here. How did you suppose, with so many people anxious to follow my footsteps, that I managed to elude observation?"

All of which was a very long speech for Yorke Norroy, and seemed longer, for it was delivered in his most deliberate, most provokingly languid fashion.

"Look!" he said, and touched a certain place on the map with such seeming carelessness that he seemed to put down the tip of his finger without premeditation. But it alighted plump on Van Corlear Square, and when he removed it the others saw that this place was marked with a big interrogation mark in red ink, and around it a circle of italics curved, reading: "Old smugglers' vault suspected to be here, but not found. Immaterial as just out of subway line."

Baedeker Bok read this aloud and looked to Norroy for more information.

"Just out of subway line," said Norroy, emphasizing his adverb. "'Suspected to be here.' In other words, not more than half a block from where the new subway is being dug are certain old vaults which, when that part of Manhattan Island was virgin forest, ran underground to the North River where 'schnapps' and Jamaica rum and French wines and so forth evaded the king's officers and came in without payment of duty. Well, gentlemen, you saw, or most of you saw, how our enemies utilized one of these same smugglers' passageways to escape us once before. There it is on the map."

He pointed again to Van Vhroon Place, where a similar note in red was found. "Both times 'suspected.' Why were they not found? Because our friends the enemy had disguised the entrances to the vaults very successfully, I have no doubt. And now, Jack, do you really believe that if we surrounded the house we should capture our quarry?"

Baedeker Bok did not meet Norroy's eyes, nor did he make reply.

"I, on the other hand, believe that they would scurry away like so many rats, closing the way behind them, and emerge—well, wherever they have planned to emerge—in some other house they have rented, perhaps in some house that is vacant. But certain it is they are prepared for such petty emergencies as 'surrounding the house.' You talk like an installment of a dime novel, Jack."

He folded up the map and replaced it.

"Concerning our little talk to-night," he added, as if it were an afterthought, just before quitting the room, "I expect to have some real action before the week is out. Meanwhile, busy yourselves with the code and other matters of immediate moment, because, once this affair gets going, you're going to have precious little time for anything else."

Whereat, as one who bears no share at all of the world's great burden of care, he whistled an aria from the opera he was to hear and departed.

CHAPTER III

HOW ULRIC ULM BECAME A DECOY TO ATTRACT AN ATTRACTIVE "VAMPIRE"

YORKE NORROY lived in one of those queer nooks of the city where, for the nonce, one seems transported to London. One entered, whether afoot or on wheels, by a huge archway, on one side of which were the quarters of that person who, in Paris, would have been called a concierge. On the other side was a sort of reception room where visitors were halted until the apartment with which they wished to communicate had been notified.

But Carson Huntley and his companions needed to go through no such formality. They passed under the archway and into a court that was a miniature London square, with its ornamental iron lamp-posts and their flickering gas, with a grass-grown inclosure where in more clement weather hydrangeas scattered their snowy petals, or in another season lilac bushes made a sort of hedge between the opposite sides of the court. There was one general entrance for the upstairs apartments, and before this motor cars and carriages drew up and their occupants were bowed out by a brassbound *commissionnaire*—either to be turned

back to the reception room or urged on, if he knew them, with a cheery greeting and a lift of his gold-braided cap.

Thus did he greet Huntley and his companions, who had dismissed their cab outside. But they did not pass by him by the upstairs entrance, but traversed the narrow sidewalk toward the most remote of what appeared to be a number of small house fronts but which were really only the exteriors of the first-floor apartments, each of which had its own private entrance and tiny outside hall. Norroy's was Number 13—that gentlemen being no believer in bad luck that was not personally manufactured.

At the same time, Ulric Ulm was making his way toward Norroy's apartment, but, in deference to the gentleman who lurked in the shadows opposite the archway, he came by the more devious route which Norroy had used on the night he left him after their first acquaintance—the underground entry Norroy had described to his other visitors. But, because the time set was the same for all, Ulric arrived at the rear entrance of the apartment generally used by Norroy's man. Norroy scarcely had time to acquaint the others with the reason he had sent for them when Valentine, who had been sent to wait for Ulm in the lobby of the apartment house on the rear street, returned with him.

"You may set out cigarettes and cigars and ascertain the gentlemen's preference. Better take long, cooling drinks; you've got a long story to listen to. Meanwhile, meet the youngster I've been telling you

about, Ulrich von Uhlm, alias Ulric Ulm. He came through the civil-service commission just as you did, Bok, and—— Come to think of it, there's a certain similarity about the names—an analogous alliteration, so to speak."

"There is nothing German about *my* family," said Baedeker Bok, whose tact was never his strong point.

Ulric Ulm, the youngest and latest recruit, looked about him in what was almost an agony of apprehension. Affairs had progressed somewhat too swiftly for him to understand since his first meeting with Norroy. That fact was evident in his look, troubled and vacillating, wandering from shaded light on a *genre* masterpiece to Tanagra figurines and peach-blow vases on brackets and beyond to the library where shabby first editions jostled gorgeous editions de luxe, brave in gilt. Here was indeed the residence of one to whom that much-misused phrase "scholar and gentleman" was not misapplied.

Ulm's glance wavered between *mise en scène* and cast. Here were the kind of people his books had told him he wanted to know—keen-eyed, broad-browed fellows, something vaguely military about them, the majority slender and agile; yet with none of them—except young Petersham, who had modestly effaced himself in the deepest chair—was this the slenderness of excessive youth. All wore their dinner jackets or dress clothes with the air of men to whom donning such garments was not an event but a nightly custom. And all were affable enough, and, though giving the

impression of shrewdly appraising him, did so without offense.

Norroy stepped forward, smiling, having mixed Ulric's drink himself.

"You said you didn't want anything, but you have the thirstiest part of the entertainment, and this cheers but does not inebriate—at least one doesn't. A French drink. Try it."

They touched glasses all around.

"I suppose you mean, Mr. Norroy; 'To our success with the Black Book.'" said Petersham, raising his glass. "If that's so, I'm sure we'll all drink deep—no heeltaps. You," he said, addressing Ulm somewhat bitterly, "are luckier than I am. *You* didn't hear about the Black Book until after you came into this service."

"He hasn't heard *yet*, Petersham," came in Norroy's most exasperating drawl. "Time enough for personal grievances after you've heard his story. Now, Ulm, suppose you tell us what has happened since you first met me, and also since you got my message this morning—if anything. Take your time; omit nothing. But first the toast. Now, Ulm."

Norroy had so engineered it that Ulric Ulm sat in a high-backed Jacobean chair directly under an inverted globe of light, while he and the others were in the shadows cast by the fire. It was an old trick; thus all might watch every change of expression on the part of the speaker without Ulm being aware of their particular scrutiny.

"I got the notice of the special civil-service examina-

tion just as you said I would. It must have been very special because I was the only one examined. No one else anywhere around. And it wasn't more than a day or so afterward that I got a letter on navy-department paper saying something like this: 'Having been certified to this department by the civil-service commission as eligible for appointment as clerk with a knowledge of typewriting, you are hereby appointed a special laborer (clerk) at \$2.80 per diem, in the office of the chief of ordnance, New York Navy Yard.'

"And it went on to say I was either to report there next morning or else to signify my rejection of the offer. Well, of course I reported, and I did what you told me to do by letter—I got your letter in the same mail——"

He bowed to Norroy.

"That is, I took lodgings near the navy yard. And I had had my mail sent care of a pawnbroker, not to the Van Corlear house. You said not to, in the letter, you remember——"

"The house in question being opposite that of our quarry," explained Norroy parenthetically.

"Well, I reported to the ordnance office, and I must say I wasn't any too happy for a while. It seems I was sent to take the place of the chief's confidential typist, who was also a stenographer and up on all the technical details about guns and breechblocks and disappearing-gun carriages and displacements and things of that sort. The chief told me so the first thing, and put me to work studying up such matters so I would

know what he was talking about when he gave me a letter. Deplored the economy of the department in sending a typist instead of a competent stenographer, and——”

“And in other ways acted exactly as he was ordered to do by Washington,” smiled Norroy, “just as the stenographer, Miss Hudson, did. As she was a sea-green incorruptible—the daughter of a naval officer—the enemy would never have tried any tricks on her; so we had her feign severe illness in order to give our young friend, here, a chance to be tempted. And on the day after our young friend took the examination the appointment clerk of the navy department requested the C. S. C. to furnish him with a list of eligibles for the position of typewriting clerk with a knowledge of German and acquainted with ordnance terms—which, as I had directed Ulm to say he was when writing down his other qualifications on the examination papers. Thus we have what seems to be only a routine appointment. Any thing else might have scared them away, especially as we do not as yet know where they get their information. Go on, Ulm.”

“Well, I hadn’t been on the job more than a day or so before I sat next to a stunning girl in a Brooklyn car who had forgotten her purse—or said she had—which gave me an opportunity to know her. If it hadn’t been that I knew there was something distinctly Number Thirteen Queer Street about the whole affair—I wasn’t in your confidence then, Mr. Norroy—I would have been flattered by the way she seemed to

welcome my acquaintance. Before the car had gone ten blocks I found I was committed to take her to dinner. Not that I would have minded under other circumstances, but as it was I felt very much like the fly the spider was inviting into his parlor. But nothing happened that night, except she seemed to be trying to give me the idea that she had fallen in love with me. Which, suspecting everybody, I took leave to doubt."

"Observe, gentlemen," again interposed Norroy, "he had held his position only three days before our friends the enemy knew all about him. Knew he was employed on confidential work of the most serious kind, and evidently that he was approachable. Of course, as to the last we cannot be sure, otherwise it would pin matters down decisively either to the civil service or the appointment clerk's office, their employees being the only two who could have read his papers and known of his apparent approachability, being of German descent, as he wrote himself down to be. You understand there is nothing particularly secret about C. S. C. examination papers. They lie in mail baskets on the desks, and it would be easy for any employee to look them over. Now we may as well except the civil service commission, as, from the enemy's standpoint, they have no secrets worth discovering. We may say almost the same for the appointment clerk's office. That narrows the field of our informer. Either he is in the very sanctum of the navy department—the secretary's office, of which the appointment clerk's office is only a part—or else

he is in the navy yard. Now the fact that the enemy knew that our other young friend, Petersham, here, was also doing confidential work, was a fact unknown to the office of the secretary of the navy. So when the enemy receives news of this sort about both the construction and repair *and* the ordnance departments, I think you will agree that it is in the navy yard that the leak must be looked for."

"Have you investigated?" asked Huntley.

"What—and scare off the whole covey for the sake of a single bird? Not much! Go on, Ulm."

"Well," Ulric resumed, "you know I consulted you that night after leaving her, and you told me to play the game just as she was playing it—to make love to her and let her think I was infatuated. I kicked on that, if you will remember, and then you came out and told me the whole story: that I was a Federal 'plant,' a decoy duck, and that when she made the proposition to me to sell my secrets I was to give her carbons of some of the seemingly less important specifications and take the money——"

"I need not tell you that if they pin any faith on those same specifications they are going to have the surprise of their life," Norroy smiled.

"You told me also, Mr. Norroy, if you will remember, that she would probably suggest our going to expensive places and doing things generally that cost money. Well, you were right; she did. And when I pleaded lack of cash, she said she had a stenographer friend who worked for a munitions factory and who

made all sorts of money selling secrets she discovered. Well, you can imagine the rest——”

There was an approving murmur from the others for Ulm's acuteness in realizing that such details must be banal to them.

“She said she would arrange the sale of my carbon copies through her friend if I got the stuff to sell. She did—and I did. I got the money, bought dress clothes, took her everywhere. Then, as you directed, I began to talk socialism to her, and, remembering all my old-time beliefs, I was as enthusiastic a socialist as any one could wish. Not that I believe any the less in the ultimate rightness of socialism, but, like so many others, I've been forced to disbelieve in the world being ready for it.

“From the sort of socialism some people practice nowadays was an easy jump to pro-Germanism. I am still buying pro-German newspapers and periodicals, as you suggested, so I had plenty of second-hand arguments why America was giving Germany the worst of it, and I protested in the name of the fatherland. Of course, that was where my German name came in handy. I could see how satisfied she was—like a cat cleaning its whiskers after cream. Lord, she was happy that night, for she made sure I was a true-blue *Deutschland-über-alles* fellow. She could hardly get rid of me quick enough to go and tell whoever it is she reports to. Up to that time I guess she thought I was one of those hounds who turn traitor for what there is in it—the money, I mean.

"The next day was yesterday. She met me and gave me another try-out to make sure I despised craven America and loved the fatherland over all. Then she said her stenographer friend had arranged for me to meet the man who was paying me, and if I brought certain other papers with me she would take me directly to this man after dinner to-morrow night. I am to meet her at Sydenham's restaurant, have dinner with her, and go afterward. That was the last I saw of her."

He finished with a faint movement of one who pushes something disagreeable away from him. "I'm glad it's over," he said simply. "When you told me I had done my share and you would attend to the remainder, I could have shouted for joy. And I want to tell you right now, Mr. Norroy, that you were putting a severe strain on me. That woman is downright fascinating and when she put her arms around my neck and told me all the wonderful things we would do together when I got the rest of the money—well, I'm only human, and I had to keep the Belgian massacres and the torpedoing of the *Lusitania* and horrible things like that before me all the time in order to hate her as a downright American ought to. She may be a poisonous snake, but she's a beautiful one too——"

"Yes," agreed Norroy, grimly. "Our other young friend, Petersham, can tell you how another such snake nearly landed him in a Federal prison for life. You've done remarkably well, Ulm. Not that I was afraid you wouldn't. I've made my living judg-

ing men for nearly a score of years, and I make mighty few mistakes. I hope your next assignment won't include any such temptation. It isn't the nicest kind of work, but when the enemy employs such tactics—what would you?"

He turned to the others. "Now you know what will happen. Petersham has told you of his case. Ulm will be conducted upstairs to The Man, whoever he is—the head and shoulders of this organization—and he will question him, then produce the Black Book for Ulm to write down his name. Now, this book——"

"There are three of them, Mr. Norroy," interrupted Petersham. "I forgot to tell you. When the man took it out, it looked like one big black book, but it was really a leather case with a back like a book, and inside it were smaller books. The one he opened was full of names and addresses, and I didn't think about the others until just now. No doubt they are the same."

"Probably some system of classification," agreed Norroy. "But the point is this: They doubtless have other such lists in other cities—certainly in the Wilhelmstrasse; so they would not hesitate to destroy this book, or these books, if they thought there was a chance of them falling into our hands."

He turned to Petersham. "There is a fireplace there?" The boy nodded. "Then, you see, it would be easy to burn this book, or these books, together with other important papers, the moment an alarm went up. I have examined the house carefully, and

there is no way of breaking in without giving an alarm. Also, from the ingenious system of reflecting glasses I noted on the window sills of each floor, persons skulking along the street can be instantly noted. No doubt they keep a good watch. Moreover, there is always a watcher at each corner, front and back; like policemen on point-duty. That was why I hired a room opposite—that I might keep watch without being seen.

“They have even provided against an attack over the roofs by renting a house separated from the rest of the block by garden walks on either side of it. So you see there is no possibility of entering the house by force and securing that book, or those books. No, they can only be gotten by the man who goes there under a safe-conduct—as Ulm is going. And, much as I trust you, young Ulric, I hardly feel that you have the experience to handle such a situation. No. Here is my plan.”

Despite the fact that they were in his own apartment, which long since he had taken the precaution to have provided with soundproof walls and windows, he lowered his voice. The others instinctively drew their chairs nearer.

And there, as the fire died down unheeded, he outlined his plan—one so desperate that Ulm had difficulty in connecting it with this calm-voiced dandy who drawled so languidly and who lived in a treasure house of rare books and china. However, it was apparent that the others knew from experience that he

would do what he said, for their faces grew grimmer and grimmer.

"Then the first thing to do," he heard Carson Huntley say, "is to get this girl out of the way and compel her to write a letter that will identify the man who carries it as Ulm."

"Precisely," agreed Norroy, lighting one of his eternal, gold-crested cigarettes.

Ulric Ulm was of the opinion that matters looked very bad indeed for the young siren who had tempted him.

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH YORKE NORROY ENTERS THE HOUSE OF THE BETRAYERS

THE big double house in Van Corlear Square was dark save for such light as escaped through the chinks and crannies of window frames and athwart the closed blinds. A man, who carried a letter prominently displayed in one hand as one might carry a flag of truce, paused at its garden gate before pushing it open, knowing as he did that if he were not already observed the creaking of the iron hinges would surely bring him to the perhaps unfavorable attention of those who were within.

The pause was but momentary, but that moment held the final decision that made all the difference between the comparative safety of the streets and the unknown terrors that awaited within. For once inside, he was no longer on American territory; he was as surely and certainly in Berlin as if he had stepped into an inner sanctum of the Wilhelmstrasse.

There was considerable delay in admitting him. Although he knew not from what angle, he was certain that somewhere eyes scrutinized him closely. But finally the door opened and he surrendered his

letter to a man who, to all appearances, was the typical English manservant.

The butler fingered the missive doubtfully.

"It is from Miss Flora Reyés," his visitor said, impatiently. "She was to bring me here, but for some reason she didn't. That letter probably explains, and you'd better take it to your master."

The butler still stood, undecided. "You were to have come with a lady? Well——" Then, as if suddenly making up his mind, he called: "Henry!" And a footman appeared from the far reaches of the hall.

"Take this to the third floor," he directed, and gave him the letter. But not for a second did he allow his gaze to wander from his visitor. "Sit down, sir," he said sullenly, as the footman made his way upstairs. He indicated a hall seat. His visitor sat down while the butler towered over him, effectually blocking his way should he be seized with a sudden desire to proceed in a forward direction.

But apparently his visitor had no such intention. He seemed to be whistling between his teeth in a bored sort of way, fiddling with a cigarette meanwhile and shooting forth little clouds of smoke in the direction of the chandelier.

"The master will see you, sir."

So silently had the footman returned that neither the visitor nor his warder heard him. He stood at the head of the stairway, bowing. The visitor arose. The butler backed away, but when his ward stepped upward, followed him. Thus they ascended the stairway until they reached the third floor.

Here, the visitor noted, the stairway came to an abrupt halt, being separated from the landing by iron-studded doors which gave evidence that they were steel-sheathed within. Since the footman's exit they had closed, and he must press with his foot twice then once and twice again on the carpet of the next to the last step—which told the visitor that there was a button underneath that gave warning of any approach—and that needed to be pressed in just this peculiar way if admittance was to be gained.

Now the doors swung back automatically and revealed themselves as armored within, just as the visitor had expected. More than that, the hallway outside was a veritable arsenal. Greeners, Sniders, Krag-Jörgensens—all manner of rifles and carbines hung on one wall; while another was devoted to automatic pistols and revolvers—Lugers, Savages, Brownings, Colts.

The footman was holding back the portières as the guest gazed, a fact he now announced by a cough. The other heard, saw, and entered.

He found himself in a room that ran the entire length of the house—a room lined with file boxes and books, ordnance maps below and above the shelves, a huge globe such as teachers use in the center of the room, ornamented by multicolored tacks, as were the maps.

Whole sections of shelves were devoted to new books in clean wrappers, row after row of the same titles. These the visitor took to be propagandist literature, having recognized the names of some of

the most pro-German writers of the day. Unopened bundles of the same—he judged—were stacked up behind the half-opened door of a closet.

There was little furniture, and what there was of it was, with one exception, chairs, high-backed Gothic chairs, a number of which had been pushed into the space under the bookshelves as if to get them out of the way, leaving a clear space in the center of the room until the one exception was reached—a long, narrow table such as might have graced the refectory of some ancient monastery. This was set broadside between a pair of double windows now securely shuttered from within.

Here sat the man who, of all the people in the world, his visitor most longed to see. He was a huge, powerful fellow, with a profusion of hair and whiskers which left little of his face uncovered save his nose and eyes. But the latter were enough to give distinction to any face—especially when they were suddenly turned, as they were now. As another might turn a brace of pistols and bid the halted one “stand and deliver,” so these eyes seemed to say: “Yield up your secrets; concealment is vain.”

He held a folded note in his hand which he had been scrutinizing with unusual care, turning from it to other specimens in the same hand which apparently had been stored in the open file box at his elbow. Now, as with a gesture he bade his visitor draw the nearest chair to the opposite side of the table and be seated, he asked sharply in German:

“You are Ulrich von Uhlm?”

The other nodded.

"Do you know why Miss Reyés did not come to-night?"

"She said the letter would explain. But she sealed it, so I suppose she did not want me to know," the other answered, with apparent sincerity.

"Hum!" commented the bearded man, and glanced at the note, which read, in part:

I have every reason to believe that there are those outside who are following me, so I dare not bring this man straight to the house. I will leave shortly after he does to throw them off the track. I do not believe they know I am here to meet him, as we came separately. He will carry other papers by which you will be able to identify him. I dare not write down his name lest this letter be lost—

The note had been written on the paper of a well-known Broadway restaurant.

"Miss Reyés says something here about—other papers," said the man at the desk. The visitor nodded, plunged his hand into an inner pocket, and handed over a long manila envelope sealed with red sealing wax and addressed to Ulrich von Uhlm at a Brooklyn address.

"That was in case of loss," said the visitor, indicating the address. "I thought it best to take all precautions. You will find there the plans and specifications of the newly adopted air-craft guns—everything I promised, except the locations of the disap-

pearing-gun carriages. This was taken out of the hands of the ordnance department and given to the chief of construction and repair."

The man at the desk drew forth a pair of heavy, gold-mounted glasses, the chain to which uncoiled itself from inside a metal button pinned to his waistcoat. Opening the envelope, he peered at each of the papers in turn.

"Good!" he said, removing his glasses and jerking at their chain, whereupon they resumed their former position under his coat. "Now, Ulrich von Uhlm, a few words about yourself. It would seem that you are one of those in whom the love of the fatherland has never wavered. Since I first heard of you, I have made inquiries in Germany concerning your family, and I find that the Uhlms are a family closely associated with the history of Saxony; that you are of a descent that makes you worthy of the all highest's commission, civil or military, once the world has been made to understand the superiority of our system—of ours, the only real civilization. When victory comes to us, there will be need for many such efficient officials, and you shall be one of those first considered. Meanwhile, your loyalty shall be put to the test by working in the dark—as, alas! so many must—until the time for our rightful recognition comes. That you will be paid is, of course, necessary, for man must live, and even the most exalted patriotism cannot put bread into our bellies. But you shall work

no more as a mere hireling. Hereafter you shall be one of us, entitled to our protection in time of danger; entitled to be succored and sent out of the country safely, or defended adequately in the courts, should occasion arise. I call on you, therefore, Ulrich von Uhlmi, to write down your name among those devoted to our cause, and then to take the oath of allegiance to the all highest."

He paused. His visitor bowed his head in submission. The man at the desk crossed to the great safe just opposite the desk, and twirled the combination knob first to a number, then to a word. Opened, it revealed packets of papers in the pigeonholes, and on the bottom lay thickly piled up packages of bills and rouleaux of gold and silver money.

He unlocked the strong box and took therefrom what to all appearances was a black book, its illuminated letters naming it "The Bible in the Levant." It was bound in black morocco and indented deeply at its brass-bound edges, between which the pages were tinted red—or so it seemed. But this was the same error Petersham had made at first, for the man's fingers moved so quickly one hardly saw him press two of the lower brass tips and slide out from their case the four smaller books that the fake cover held.

"Here," said the man, sliding out one of the books and opening it, "is my name—as it was first written down." He had turned the thin but tough pages of paper, and under the "H's" pointed out his name. "Heinzemann, Johann." "No 'von' like your own,

young sir; a plain name for a plain man; yet my long and faithful service has 'finally brought its reward in the position I now hold—that of commander in chief of the all highest's 'Intelligenza' in America. That name was written long ago, young sir."

This was needless information, for the ink in which every name on the page was written had long since faded. Only a little less so was the line in red ink that was drawn through the name and to which the visitor's attention was also called.

"The red line—that is promotion. My name figures in each of these other three, Classes 'C,' 'B,' and 'A.' In all but the book of 'Class A' you will find the red line drawn through it. The green line signifies that the operator came to his death through violence. The violet line is for spies and traitors—you will find both violet and green lines through *their* names. The blue-pencil line is for natural death. But come, now—you are ready and I am wasting time."

He turned the pages until he reached the "U" section, turning its pages until the names were in ink less faded until a page was reached when it was quite fresh, as though written but yesterday—last week—last month. Heinzmann found the place, dipped pen in ink, and raised his eyes—to look straight into the ugly, vicious hole of an automatic revolver, over the sight of which was clamped a Maxim silencer.

He leaped to his feet, an unuttered oath choking in his throat.

"You will please resume your seat, Herr Heinzmann," said the stranger, his hand reaching out for the four books. The voice, no longer feigned, was that of Yorke Norroy.

CHAPTER V

TELLS ABOUT THE BATTLE OF VAN CORLEAR SQUARE

AS Norroy pocketed the papers, Heinzmann sprang; but it was only to meet the flattened palm of the secret agent and to collapse in his chair. Then his pointed finger stretched out to the button which set the mechanism in motion which opened the steel-sheathed doors. Before Norroy could interfere, he had accomplished his aim, and the secret agent heard the scuffling of men on the stairs. He had neither the time nor the life to waste in playing humanitarian; so his thin, steely fingers shifted the position of his automatic pistol and brought down the butt on Heinzmann's head. Almost in the same second, Norroy turned to press the second button. He heard the doors clang with a deep boom as they shut, and an angry exclamation was suddenly cut short.

Norroy had acted none too soon, for all his rapidity of movement—not soon enough, seemingly; for he heard the vicious *ping* of a small projectile propelled at a rate too rapid to be other than a bullet of the same sort his own silent weapon instantly gave back, and just as the velvet portières were pushed

open in his rear. One man fell back into another's arms, his automatic going off in air, as the suddenly stiffened finger continued to press it, and shattering the globes of the overhead electrolier.

But the second man came on, undaunted; and Norroy, loath as he was to take life so ruthlessly, steeled himself to the remembrance that he, too, was a soldier, if not on a foreign battlefield—and fired before the other had time to raise his weapon. The second man tossed up his hands; then, with an ugly rattling in his throat, he collapsed like an overturned rocking-chair, head and feet seeming momentarily to meet as he fell.

"God!" said Norroy, and put his hand to his own throat.

But he was soon recalled from the horror of another's death. A dull booming began somewhere in the rear; it meant they were battering on the steel-studded door. Whether he was to escape or not he did not know.

But the Black Book *should*; that was certain. Norroy had not isolated himself in the house of his enemies with any haphazard plans. His men were in the house opposite, expectant of the move he was about to make, only waiting for the signal to dash downstairs and into the street to pick up what he had expected to hurl, and which he now held in his hands.

* The battering on the door had died down; followed an ominous silence. He listened and heard the shrill squeak of steel against steel. Evidently one with a mind more masterful had taken charge, and, scorning the hysteria of more humble minds, had set

to work scientifically to dig out his badger. It meant only a question of time before he would succeed. Norroy knew he must be quick if either he or the book were to leave that room.

Norroy's fingers trembled slightly as he lighted a little Catherine wheel he took from his pocket and held it until the flame began to leap along the fuse. Then he hurled it through the branches of the tree.

Once he saw it fall sputtering to the street, he snatched an elastic band from the desk, and not troubling to return them to their case, which had fallen on the floor in his struggle with Heinzmann, he fastened together the four thin books. Aiming at the brightly gyrating Catherine wheel below, he flung them after it.

But such are the small things that alter destinies, there blew along the street at that instant—one would have sworn it turned a corner—a gusty gale of sea mist and rain from the East River that separated the books while they were still in mid-air.

So that before Carson Huntley and the others could reach the street, three persons who passed—a girl and a gray-beard, these two in company, and close at their heels a lout of a boy—became members of the cast of that long-drawn-out drama, "The Quest of the Black Book."

But Norroy was to know nothing of this for some time to come. For, now that he had rid himself of the books and had every reason to believe they would be picked up almost immediately by his associates from

across the way, he turned to make possible his own escape. But first to find his get-away.

Manifestly, to go by the front windows was impossible. There, dangling from above in the light from the street lamp, he would be too fair a mark for desperate men, already discovered in their treason and carrying noiseless weapons, especially as he must swing past two windows on the way down.

He ran, rubber-shod, silently, to a rear window, which he raised with a minimum of noise. Here matters were worse; to pass down he must first reach a lower roof, where he had no doubt he would be shot instantly. Remained only the side windows, and, the ominous squeaking of the steel continuing, he raised one of these. Here matters were nearly as bad. There was a sun-parlor roof that curved out from the middle of the first floor, supported by two portico columns.

In desperation—for he knew his time was short—he took no time to be noiseless with the last window. This he flung up. To his joy, there was but one window to each of the floors below. As both of these were bay windows and both were dark, he would be secure from the gaze of any one within, especially as the bushy boughs of a huge evergreen, an enormous cedar, shut out all light from the street.

Norroy heard something giving; it was as if a knee had been placed against the weakened supports of the double doors and they had bent inward. He had found his way out just in time.

He reached beneath his coat and brought out a

coil of fine wire and linen cord, woven flat, just strong enough to support his weight, yet so fine that a hundred feet, rolled up, occupied not much more room than the same amount of twine. This was an invention of Norroy's. From another pocket he brought out a double hook such as is used for sailors' hammocks. One end of the wire he had been prudent enough to have made into a secure loop before starting on his perilous mission. This he now attached to one bend of the hook, and, holding hook and loop fast, tossed the coil from the window, where by sheer weight it payed itself out until it hung a long, curly line, a jarring of which indicated that what remained of the coil had touched the ground.

The door gave way with a loud crash. Norroy waited but for one thing. Raising his automatic, he fired at the remaining light—that of the desk lamp; for to have tried to escape with light in the room was but an invitation to shoot him down as he slipped along the side of the house. The crash of the stand as it fell, and the tinkle of glass, left the room entirely dark.

Jamming down the hook and making it doubly secure with a blow from the butt of his weapon, Norroy, who had lain on the sill, half-way out, when he fired, now released his hold on the wood, and, bracing his toes against the wall, embarked upon his journey into emptiness.

He heard curses above and the fall of something heavy, so judged his enemies had tripped upon the bodies that lay by the portières. They must make a

light before they could do anything further. He doubted if they had anticipated his escape; could fancy the pseudo butler and footman testifying he had carried no package of any sort, and that they both had mentally inventoried his person for suspicious bulges of any sort, and had seen none—his revolver had swung in an arm holster, a long thin affair of Harveyized steel. Therefore how *could* he have escaped?

He shifted his grip again and yet again. Despite his cautious puttering about with his rubber-shod toes against the brick and mortar of the wall, the wire slid through his hands, clad in re-enforced gloves, cutting them cruelly. Now his neck came in contact with the cedar boughs, then his face; the needles of the cedar attacked his nose, his mouth, so that he must close his eyes; and, finding himself between two evils, he let the wire slide. It was like so much red-hot metal. When his feet touched ground, his hands felt as though they had been incinerated. It would be many weeks before they healed.

But he heeded them not at all for the moment. There was too much to be done. He ran headlong to the street. Baedeker Bok sprang forward in the darkness of the garden with upraised weapon. But his voice identified him and Norroy gripped his arm.

"You got what I threw?" he asked breathlessly.

"Huntley has them. He's at the back of the house with James and Jarboe. I'm here with Wammell and Furnival. Petersham's at the phone round the corner. The D. J. men and the bomb-squad police ought to be here any moment now. Here they are! Look!"

Norroy immediately took charge. The men from headquarters—the bomb squad, so called since their mission was chiefly to look out for bombing and arson generally, which would probably be traceable to this home—and those from the department of justice, especially appointed for just such round-ups as this, crowded around him.

"Scatter! Scatter!" Norroy commanded quickly, but not before the man nearest him had clutched at his throat, doubled at the knees, and fallen on his face. "They have silencers on their guns. Out of the light, quick! Half of you to the rear; you with the axes break down the doors! The remainder fall back and cover them. Fire at the flashes; that is the only way you'll identify them. It looks like it would be worse than I anticipated!" For the flashes, each one indicating a weapon fired, were lighting up the darkness at the rate of half a dozen to the minute. The front of the darkened house was alive with them. "It seems they haven't the get-aways I thought they had. It means a general defense. Sergeant, send in a call for the reserves."

It will be long remembered by the inhabitants of Van Corlear Square, that round-up, that stubborn defense of No. 27; and, unless they read this, they will continue to esteem it a peculiarly awful gambling raid and will go on wondering why no word of it appeared in the newspapers. For before the attack began, gates and window screens of thin, tough steel appeared to guard doors and windows, making the entrance of

the intruders doubly difficult, and while the policemen used axes and battering-rams, a galling fire poured down from all the upstairs windows. And, although this gradually lessened as secret agents and department of justice men lying flat in the darkness of the sidewalk or of the garden—having previously extinguished the street lights—winnowed out the marksmen, three ambulances had their full quota before it was over.

Then suddenly the fire ceased, and the house became as dark as before. The axes speedily completed their demolition of the basement door, and those policemen who were unhurt, together with those only slightly wounded, were rushing into the lower hallway, followed by the department of justice men when they heard, high and shrill, the warning whistle of Norroy.

They crowded back.

"Out of the house!" called Norroy. "Out of the house!" he commanded sternly, since there were some who seemed averse to obeying. "Quicker than that, you fools! Get away from the house as fast as you can! To the other side of the street, quick!"

A strange fear was gripping him. That silence, following so closely upon such a determined defense, was ominous in the extreme, just as the silence that had followed the battering against the steel-sheathed door upstairs had been. He knew there had been no sudden change of plans; that all this was part of some long-prearranged plan, as his own had been.

He had not long to wait, for a long tongue of flame lapped outward from a third-floor window and lit up the cedar trees; another followed, and another. Then it seemed from the very earth beneath them there came a dull roar, and in a minute the air was hot and full of flying particles that stung the face and hands. It subsided almost as quickly as it had come about; but when they looked, the old house at Number 27 was in a sad plight.

The lower front had been literally blown out; the basement and drawing-room doors and windows were gone; inside was a mere shell, while overhead the fire, fanned by the great draft from below, waxed hotter and hotter.

"Give the alarm!" commanded Norroy curtly.

Immediately two uninjured policemen ran to the nearest fire boxes.

"They fought us off while they got out all their most important books and documents," explained Norroy grimly to Carson Huntley; "then they set fire to the rest, and after they had passed safely out by whatever underground passages they had ready, they left a bomb behind them to block up the way and destroy all traces of the passage and incidentally to assist the destruction they left behind them upstairs. Well, thank the Lord, we've got what's most important—those books. It won't be long before we've broken their system to bits now. You have them, Carson?"

Carson Huntley plunged hand into pocket and pro-

duced two thin books. "There they are," he answered. "Why, what's the matter, Yorke? Nothing wrong?"

"Where are the other two?" demanded Norroy, in an awful voice. "Where are they, Carson?" In his excitement he found he was gripping Huntley's collar. "Quick! Tell me!"

One look at the other's face convinced him that Carson was ignorant of the existence of any save those in his hands. Helpless with fear, trembling, hardly able to control his voice, Norroy called his men around him.

They had not come through unscathed. Baedeker Bok had both coat and shirt sleeve ripped up, while James had been binding the flesh wound beneath. A red smear along the cheek showed where a bullet had narrowly missed Jarboe.

By this time the street was crowded with interested and excited onlookers, but the uniformed police had arrived and were keeping the crowd within fire lines.

"Quick—before the engines come!" said Norroy huskily. "See—the blaze from the house will show you what you missed before. There were four books. Search street and garden. You'll find them."

And feverishly he himself set to work to search. But they did not find them—for the very good reason that neither of them was there. And the only persons who knew of their whereabouts were, first, that afore-said girl and graybeard, and, second, that gawk of a boy.

Despite the glare from the burning house, Norroy's face was ashen pale. But he had recovered his old

equanimity; his indifferent manner returned to aid him.

"It's not the first time my plans have gone awry," he said lightly. "There was but one weak link in my chain; I forgot to allow for what would happen between the time you men got my signal and the time you reached the street. You had two floors to descend, and during that time the watchers at either corner had the same chance that you had. But no! They would have not been content with two of the books. They would have stayed and given you battle for all four. Were there others who passed by on this side of the street?"

"I saw a girl and an old man," said Baedeker Bok, forgetting his injured arm. "They went that way." He pointed due west.

"And I saw a young chap going in the opposite direction. Come to think of it, he was looking back," said Ulric Ulm. "But I thought it was because of the Catherine wheel."

He looked downcast. He felt out of it. He had not been given a weapon, while Petersham had; and he felt, with all due justice to Petersham, that he was entitled as much as he to bear arms in his country's defense. And now the job had been bungled, after all his neat chicanery, of which he was inordinately proud—yes, and despite all Norroy's personal risks.

Norroy turned on him sharply.

"I thought you were left in charge of Flora Reyés?" he asked sharply.

"Just after you forced her to write that letter the stuff you put in her coffee sent her to sleep," Ulm answered, "and I locked her in besides. The windows are barred and the door has a bolt outside. You promised her you would set her free if the letter worked, anyhow."

Norroy cut him short.

"You will remember hereafter to obey orders implicitly," he commanded; then, relenting at the sight of Ulm's face: "I don't blame you for wanting to see the end of what you were so instrumental in beginning—only it isn't the end, I'm sorry to say. There are two more books to be found somewhere, and if you want to help in the finding you will not disobey again. But our work is over here," he added, as the equipment of the fire department came thundering up. "Nothing more will be saved out of that blaze. Come to the club—all of you—we will have a doctor in to look at you, Bok, and you, Jarboe. But we have a busy night to-night sending messages throughout the Union—to round up these fellows before they are warned." He tapped the two books that remained. "And I cannot spare a man. To-morrow the search for the other two begins."

So, leaving Van Corlear Place affairs in charge of Captain Williams of the department of justice, the secret agents pushed their way through the growing crowds outside the fire lines; and, with one glance behind at the raging furnace that had once been the

seat of Teutonic espionage in America, Norroy led the way to the nearest taxicab stand.

"Delaroche Street, off Stuyvesant Square," he ordered, giving the St. Anthony Club address, "and quick!"



BOOK THREE
THE BUREAU OF MISSING ARTICLES

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH A BLACK BOOK FALLS FROM THE SKY: THE NARRATIVE OF MISS CLOVIS CLARKE

MUCH has been explained to me of the events that follow; events that I must, perforce, set down as very mysterious. That was how they happened to be at the time, and, as the explanation did not come until some time later, I can do no better than begin the story of my adventures with a certain night in midwinter, when I passed through Van Corlear Square, and incidentally into the story of the Black Book.

Strangely enough, it all came about through the buying of a hat. It was a very large hat; had it been otherwise there would be no story. It was not cheap. You should have heard my stepfather when I announced my intention of expending my entire weekly income upon so futile an object. Generally I give it to him—my income, I mean, if that word is not misapplied to a sum so small—and he spends it upon his beloved birds. No hats or such trifling gear for him. He has worn the same hat day in, day out, indoors and outdoors, until it seems a part of him.

Down on Long Island, where we live, I have but

one chance to see people and to be seen by them—Sunday at church. And for a month of Sundays I had remained away sooner than be seen in a straw hat; no matter if it was black and so overladen with velvet bows that its “basic construction was not likely to be discovered,” as stepfather kindly pointed out.

No, I would have a new one, and I would go to New York to get it.

So, to show his utter inconsistency, after coming with me to “protect” me, he incontinently abandoned me to do my shopping alone. He had decided that for an adequate inspection of the new birds in the Bronx Zoo, a person would require the entire afternoon, and, as his cousin’s house in Van Corlear Square was nearer there than any of my shopping places—being indeed north of Central Park, a queer, old-fashioned nook that New Yorkers seem to have forgotten—I was to meet him there, and doubtless we would be invited to dinner, “which would save something,” he reflected, a bird’s-eye view of the day’s “unnecessary expenditures” having been again exhibited for my edification.

After this, you may well believe there was little conversation between us at dinner. But it does no good to be angry with him; he is so utterly indifferent to most everything. But on this particular night he was unusually absent-minded. At the bird house he had met a brother fancier who had given him two heron’s eggs to hatch. The other had heard of stepfather’s collection of storklike creatures, and claimed that his own specimen of female heron was utterly

unlike any other and that these eggs would hatch out more of the same variety.

My stepfather was anxious to get the eggs into one of our own heron's nests; for, although he carried them in a cotton-wadded, carefully sealed case and next to his flannel shirt, where they received body warmth, he feared the alteration of nesting conditions was enough to interfere with their hatching. So, sooner than politeness warranted, considering we had invited ourselves to sup, he bundled me into my wraps and was steering me toward the subway.

And it was then, as we passed through Van Corlear Square, that my hat and I, and he and his heron eggs, entered into the story of the Black Book.

The square was dark and deserted. I should imagine that its inhabitants adhere to gas for lighting purposes and that their living rooms are mostly at the back of their houses, for only the faintest illumination, the sort that comes when lights are turned low, percolated through the old-fashioned fan-lights or through the curtained glass panels at the sides of their inner doorways. The rooms themselves were either unlighted or else heavily shuttered or curtained. It was a very dark street indeed, and just the sort of a place I would pick out for a holdup were I a highway robber.

I said as much to stepfather, who responded sharply that the head under it was as foolish as the hat over it. I could see him feeling for his precious heron eggs. As if any one would wish to steal *them*!

Just as he spoke, however, something strange hap-

pened. We were only a few feet away when a little bit of fireworks fell in the middle of the street in front of us and began to sputter away, turning around and around. I stopped for a moment to watch it. And then I saw a man coming down the street toward us. Just as he came up I felt something strike my hat. I put up my hand. Immediately something fell to the ground directly in front of the approaching man, who, now that he was nearer and had the light of a street lamp full on him, I saw was a very young man in a shabby overcoat.

He stooped and picked something up just as I bent over to see what had fallen to the ground. As I passed him—for now my stepfather tugged at my sleeve—I saw that he had opened what looked like a book, and I saw thin sheets of paper fluttering in the wind, which had suddenly become very cold and fierce. As I turned my head to look behind me, he ran toward the corner we had left behind.

Back in the center of the street, the little firework still sputtered and sent off its sparks. Just as we were about to turn the corner, another queer thing occurred. The door to one of the houses on the opposite side was flung violently open, and man after man streamed out and toward where the pinwheel was now expiring.

I came to a dead stop, for I saw, in that little area lighted up by the street lamp, that several of the men had plumped down on hands and knees, while others were running about, 'twixt curb and curb, all seeming to be hunting for something; while the man who had

picked up the book was just disappearing around the far corner.

But my movement as if to make my way back again was anticipated by my stepfather, who gripped me none too gently, I can assure you.

"But I want to tell them who has what they're hunting for," I urged.

"You come along with me," he insisted. As I went I shivered. For, all unknown to me, there had been a man standing in the shadows so near to me I could have touched him with my hand had I reached it out. But I did not notice him until I looked around for the last time before turning into the next street, and I saw him twist his head around from looking at the men farther down the street to turn and glare after me.

Again I stood still for a second, but this time from fright. The man's manner was malevolent enough at first. As he continued to stare, it became absolutely menacing. Seeming to make up his mind with an effort, he turned again toward the center of the street.

It needed no tug at my arm this time. A taxicab, with its flag up, was passing slowly. Fearful any second that the man might follow, I stopped the cab and pushed my stepfather into it.

As the door slammed upon us, the man at the corner turned suddenly. Looking through the little window at the back, I saw him running like a deer after us. But as I learned later, this was only until the taxi passed by another street lamp and he could discover its number. Strange a thing so obvious did not occur

to me at the time; for, when I looked again, he had turned and was running back in the direction from which he had come.

To all this part of my adventure my stepfather was entirely oblivious. He was too busy making sure that his eggs were intact to say much at first, but when he did it was to inquire with some acidity as to why I had taken the taxi, and who, did I think, was to pay for it?

"I am," I assured him quickly to get his mind on more important things. Then: "What does it all mean? What happened back there? What do you think?"

"My curiosity in such matters is oversatisfied every morning when I pick up the newspaper only to find it full of robberies and murders," he answered shortly. "I told you New York was no place for you to come alone. Where would you have been without me?"

"But the book?" I persisted, as I raised my hands to my hair and began patting it, as a woman always does after excitement of any sort. "But the book, father?"

"What's that?" he asked suddenly

For, in arranging my hair, I had bowed my head, and, the hat being slanted, something fell forward and almost at his feet.

I had felt it fall, and I now leaned over and picked it up.

"Why, this *is* the book!" I cried in genuine alarm.

It seemed incredible; but what I held in my hand was identical in size, contour, and general appearance

—it even had the same sort of thin, tough paper—
with that book the youth in the shabby overcoat had
snatched up from the sidewalk.

It was very light, and had fallen on my new big
hat and rested there without my knowing it.

"It *is*! It's the same book!" I said excitedly.*

* Miss Clarke's narrative is continued in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER II

TELLS HOW HER ENEMIES PLOTTED UNDERGROUND

THERE were many people in New York during the last decade to whom what we are accustomed to call melodrama is ordinary, everyday, commonplace incident. This could not be better proven than by the indubitable fact that when a knock came on the floor directly under the feet of Henricus Voegel—whose “palatial mansion” on Riverside Drive was one of the sights the barker never failed to point out during the days before the great war.

Mr. Voegel arose, and, with no more excitement than if the knock had come in the usual way by the door, lifted the electric lamp to the mantel over the fireplace. He then pushed table and easy-chair of light wicker to more remote sections of the room, and revealing a section of the flooring by rolling away part of a green fiber rug, brought his heel down sharply: once, twice; once, twice, thrice, once twice; once. Whereupon, the seemingly seamless section of floor was propelled upward by a pair of hands.

A second later rug, chair, table, and lamp were in their proper places, and Mr. Voegel's visitor was freeing himself from grime in a little lavatory. He re-

turned to the larger room busily whisking off cobwebs from his coat. Had Miss Clovis Clarke been there to see, she would have recognized in him the man in the shadows whose threatening attitude hurried her into that passing taxicab.

His face was paler than most, and the blue-black lines, left even after the closest shaving, were more pronounced than the average American's. Yorke Norroy would have said instantly that this man had worn a beard until very recently.

His eyes were lined in black, too—circled rather; and their stare was strained rather than startling. He sat down suddenly opposite Voegel, and drew a long, deep breath. Then he put both palms to the sides of his aching head.

Henricus Voegel was growing more and more alarmed, first by the appearance, now by the actions, of his midnight visitor. That worthy, corpulent of habit and conservative by nature, had known for some time that he was apt to be called upon to do his duty by the league to which he owed allegiance—to which also, were the truth told of many more than Voegel, he owed in no small measure his financial success.

It had been years since he first joined it, but even in those peaceful days Germany had been preparing for war. And to the credit of the brains of those behind her organization it had been recognized that it was best to put under obligation in peace times those from whom they expected assistance when their armies were in the field. So Henricus Voegel had been helped to place and financial power by the patronage of those

others also of the league, who, in his turn, he had patronized. With him and those like him in other cities had been placed those gigantic orders that the German government controlled. His credits had been extended by these same energetic offices, and altogether a millionaire had been made out of one who had originally hoped to be no more than an ordinarily successful wholesaler.

Now had come the time to pay.

He had known for some time that the day was at hand when something would be expected of him. For it was plain that, despite his efforts and those of thousands like him, America would soon be in the war. It was then that he had been told to close his city home for the summer, leaving not even a caretaker. During his absence a corps of workingmen, controlled by the league, had been installed in the house to construct this suite of chambers beneath the basement and cellar of his house and to connect it up with that subterranean system upon which the league counted to protect them even in case of the discovery of any one of their strongholds.

Which explains why Henricus Voegel was on hand, why a bright fire burned on the hearth, comforting to one who had been clambering about in chilly, clammy cellarways, and also why Max Spiegel now appeared in the snowy-white jacket of a waiter and gave the newcomer the military salute, followed by the sign adopted to identify the leaguers.

"What will *mein herr* have? There is a bar, as *mein herr* knows, no doubt, and it is completely fur-

nished? Something warming? Schnapps? Or coffee? Or would the *mein herr* have food?"

The man gave his order, adding shortly that Max was to bring the bottle. When it came he poured himself out in quick succession three small glasses of Hollands, which he drank neat, staring gloomily in the fire the while. Spiegel eyed him impassively. It was not for an underling to show signs of surprise at anything an officer chose to do. And by his bearing, as well as by his short, close-clipped speech, this stranger was no less. Even the master, Voegel, he treated with a certain careless offhandedness, returning no answer to a twice-repeated question.

The spirits seemed to take effect, for his hands ceased to tremble, and when he turned to Voegel the muscles of his face no longer twitched.

"The worst has happened," he suddenly answered as Voegel prepared to ask again. "Our central office at Van Corlear Square has been destroyed. Somehow they discovered it, and we were forced to fire it and blow up the underground communications after us. I was not in the house when it happened, but was on watch at one corner, in case of suspicious-looking visitors or gatherings, to give the alarm. Krafft, my comrade, watched at the other corner. But, despite all our precautions, we have been outwitted. Norroy, the dean of the American secret agents, the man we thought we had under surveillance, just as we thought we had him in our hands once before, somehow secured entrance to the house and got possession of the

books containing the names of all implicated in the league——”

“The Black Book?” asked Voegel, his hands and face trembling and twitching. “The four little books in the black case? Why, my name was written there. Mine and——”

“I said that a company of men had hidden themselves in a house opposite. These men secured the other two books, were joined by their chief, this Norroy, who managed to escape from the house—God alone knows how—and began to attack to gain entrance. They were joined by others—policemen of the bomb squad and department-of-justice men. Our people held them off for a quarter of an hour or more—no doubt to remove those files and map cases containing papers of the greatest importance. Then they retreated by the underground way after firing the house and blowing up the secret passage beneath. Have I not told you this once?”

“But the Black Book?” entreated Voegel, his eyes anguished. “If the names of all are thus betrayed, where then is our league? Where am I? Where is—any one? Cannot they be recovered, cannot——”

“I do not know,” answered Muhlenberg, eyeing the other coldly. “I have done my best. I know where three of the books were taken—two to an address on Delaroché Street, which is the headquarters of this Norroy and his agents; that much I know because after the assault I kept edging near them in the crowd. Whether these can be recovered depends upon the number of leaguers who can be found to sacrifice them-

selves in an attack. As for the third book, I should be able to secure it to-night or to-morrow. And we will hope that Krafft is no less successful with regard to his quarry. Take heart, Herr Voegel"—but he spoke in iciest tones—"it is even odds that your name is in one of the books not already secured. But"—he broke off abruptly at the sound of knocks on the floor, repeated in the same code he had used—"here, doubtless, is some one who may be able to explain. The orders given out a month or more ago, when first this Norroy came into conflict with us, were that, in case of disaster in Van Corlear Square, all were to repair here as soon as possible. The documents and maps were carried elsewhere——"

While he spoke he had been assisting Voegel to remove the various impediments in the way of the new arrival, who proved to be a young man attired in the extreme of conservative fashion. He looked the young American professional man of the best antecedents and highest prospects. He was conspicuous to the unskillful eye only by a peculiar dead whiteness of skin and excessive blackness of hair. His eyes seemed black, too, and their pupils were narrowed to pin points, a fact that would have informed a medical man as to something inimical to the aforesaid prospects. He would have been recognized by Yorke Norroy as the one by whom he had been decoyed almost to his death, and not more than a few months before. Also he would have been known by a certain Charles Petersham, until lately draftsman at the New York Navy Yard.

"Knatchbull—good!" said Muhlenberg. "Good! Good!" And he rubbed his hands. "Where is Heinzmann? What has become of the others?"

He continued to volley questions at the newcomer, who, making no attempt to answer them, sank down in an easy-chair near the fire and yawned prodigiously. Presently he noted the lavatory door partly open, and disappeared behind it, feeling for some article he carried in a hip pocket. This action, taken in connection with the yawn, would have completely verified the inimical opinion formed of him by any observing physician.

Voegel, to whom the newcomer was a stranger, and who had pricked up his ears at the sound of his singular name, gazed suspiciously after him.

"Who is he?"

Muhlenberg's look was one of mingled contempt and forced admiration. "Knatchbull is the name he uses," he answered slowly. "And then, paraphrasing an old song: 'As for his nation, and also his salvation—well, he hasn't got either.' He's the one man I ever met whom God forgot to give a conscience to. Now I'm a German, and so are you, and we're fighting for our country, just as much here as if we were on the battlefield. In fact, more so, for we get none of the glory and take all of the risks——"

Voegel shuddered perceptibly. "Can they—er—hang us if—if——"

"Not only *can*, but *will*. Can you ask—after that explosion last week at Indian Head that killed twenty

and destroyed twenty times that many thousand dollars' worth of property? After——"

He enumerated other instances, each of which went further to reduce his listener to partial paralysis. Then he broke off suddenly to take up his first theme:

"As I say, we're Germans fighting for Germany, but he's—I believe he plans and plots and perpetrates out of pure perversity; out of general cussedness as these Americans say. Hush! He's coming back——"

Whatever it was had happened behind the door of the lavatory—and that same wise physician would have told you the secret lay hidden in the little black box its owner was now restoring to his hip pocket—it had had an effect beside which the ordinary imbibing of the superlative dram drinker pales its ineffectual fires. Knatchbull's eyes were bright, animallike; his gestures quick, impatient; he seemed to surge and seethe within himself. His whole being seemed in much the same condition as that of a high-powered motor car left at a curb with both spark and throttle advanced.

Voegel, the man of peace, looked once and shuddered; then his eyes sought other employment, and, during the continuation of the colloquy, persistently avoided those of the last arrival. Muhlenberg, however, although his uneasy bearing resembled that of a keeper in a cage with a panther only partially tame, brought his fears to brook with an effort, and explained the affair of the missing books.

Knatchbull heard him out in silence.

"I was hoping for something of the sort," he said, his eyes snapping. "I told Heinzmann that you and

Krafft would be sure to know something. Now we have a very short time left to act. I am temporarily in charge. This Norroy brained Heinzmann, and he is in a bad way; only partially conscious when I left him. He is at the old house a block away from Van Corlear Square—with the files. Doctor Gebhart is looking after him. The passages between the houses are entirely destroyed, but by to-morrow morning the stuff will be brought here. Sooner or later the destroyed passages will be burrowed into, and the connection between the houses discovered. We will anticipate that by abandoning the house. Hereafter this will be our headquarters. With this country on the verge of war, mysterious houses will not be tolerated. But who will suspect that we meet at the residence of that pillar of probity, Henricus Voegel?"

The man thus apostrophized shifted uneasily in his seat, and, without looking up, addressed himself apparently to the atmosphere.

"Many will suspect, if those books are not recovered," he muttered heavily. "How do you know that at this moment it is not common knowledge that I am of your league? Two of those books——"

The eyes of Knatchbull became brighter than before; his teeth snapped together; he shot forward his right hand and threw out the fingers of it, making sharp, cracking noises.

"But do we know where they are?" he asked in triumph. "To recover those books is doubtless impossible; they have taken every precaution against their recovery I make no doubt. But it needs only

one man with courage to destroy them—yes, and with them the men who have read the names therein, and also any notes they may have taken. In fact, the whole building—perhaps the block——”

He stood erect, a smiling, sinister figure. Then he made a movement which the horrified Muhlenberg misinterpreted as merely symbolic; so Knatchbull pushed him impatiently aside, and went through the business necessary to expose the trapdoor.

“I came first to make sure all was well. The others are waiting, each half a block apart. One should be near enough to hear.”

He stamped with his foot in the prescribed code. After a minute or so of waiting he repeated his movements. Slowly the trapdoor arose and another man appeared. From farther away they heard the sound of scampering; then, at brief intervals, came a second man, a third, a fourth, until all whom Knatchbull expected had arrived.

While he awaited them he again retired into the seclusion of the lavatory, to reënter for the second time, replacing the black box in his pocket, his eyes shining more viciously than before.

He wasted no time, waving away the importuning Max Spiegel with his offers of refreshment.

“No time for that now,” he said brusquely; “but wait”—as Max was about to retire—“you are one of the league. It is only right you should remain and listen and take your chance with the others.”

Spiegel saluted and withdrew to the rear. Some seated, more standing, the seventeen men, all who re-

mained of the Van Corlear Square garrison, listened with troubled faces. Knatchbull seemed the only one thoroughly to enjoy what he was about, his shining eyes like those of some snake making ready to strike.

When he had concluded, his gusto was even more evident than before, especially when he saw that Voegel, of whose distaste for him he had become fully aware, had covered his eyes with one hand while he steadied himself by gripping a chair with the other. Knatchbull prolonged the man's agony as long as he dared.

"All will draw lots except two. One we cannot spare because the league needs his brain; the other because the league needs his name. I refer to myself and to Herr Voegel. The others——"

He addressed Spiegel. "Markers," he said briefly. Max looked at him with dazed eyes. "Chips," explained Knatchbull. A box of them was produced—red, white, blue. Of the last Knatchbull selected fourteen to which he added a single white one.

"A hat!" he commanded briefly. "A stiff hat!"

The nearest gave him a black derby. He tossed the chips into it, covered the top of it with the book Voegel had been reading before Muhlenberg came, and rattled the chips vigorously within.

"Form in line," he said, "approach one at a time, thrust in your hand and take one. Are you ready? Good!"

Without warning he snapped off the light in the electric lamp. Now that they had the kindly darkness to screen their emotion, the sound of heavy breathing

predominated, varied by great gasps as if some were unable momentarily to breathe at all. Voegel noted dully that the gasps came always when one of the dim figures approached the standing Knatchbull and a clicking sound followed as the chips were disturbed. Following the gasp came a gulp as the men passed on by Voegel and into the outer shadows. And as each passed, Knatchbull called out a number.

As suddenly as it had been snapped off, the light was now snapped on, and for an instant the room was full of staring men, each bent over a colored chip flat in the palm of his hand. One only was distinguished from the others. He, forgetful of discipline and of his low degree, had sunk down and remained seated in the presence of his superiors. It was the hitherto elate Max Spiegel, and his newly donned white jacket was no whiter than his dead whiteness of face.

Knatchbull strode across to him. "You?" he questioned. "Good! You are lucky to be able to serve the fatherland so soon. Take charge of him, you—Hartmann——"

He jerked his finger toward a bowed-shouldered man with steel frames to his spectacles, a man who looked like an ancient journeyman, save for the fierce fanaticism of his face. He, Hartmann, was the bomb expert, the maker of the infernal clockwork, who handled the "nitro" and "picric" as mothers handle their babies.

"Take him to the old house. Get the materials together as fast as you can. No splitting hairs, no timing. The man who uses this will have to go up

with his bomb. He won't have a chance to plant it—if I know my Norroy. He's guarded against *that*. But no man can be guarded against another who means to lose his life along with his enemies."

He shook the limp hand of the inert man. "Off with you now! Remember, it is for the fatherland."

Was it possible that Knatchbull dared to sneer even if it were ever so faintly? Muhlenberg's hand clenched as he stared at him. But there was no sign of a sneer; Knatchbull's face was saturnine as he added:

"Remember, too, not to fail. For it is better to die for one's fatherland than to die at the hands of one's brothers. Hurry along, Hartmann. Every minute wasted now is full of peril for the five thousand whose names are in those two books. Remember that, my friend," he said as Spiegel stood halfway down the ladder that led below, "remember that your sacrifice saves five thousand. *Auf wiedersehen*."

The trapdoor closed. "Now, my friend," said Knatchbull to Muhlenberg, "we will draw lots for five men to accompany you to Long Island to secure the second book. Five I shall keep for Krafft, five for myself. The markers again—ah, I had forgotten our friend was gone!—hand them over, Hartleben——"

And in silence the lots were drawn as to which were to become the active enemies of Miss Clovis Clarke.

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH OUR HERO HEARS OUR HEROINE'S VOICE OVER THE WIRE AND RUSHES TO HER ASSISTANCE

IN the topmost tower of the tallest building north of lower Broadway, above the illuminated dial of that clock that overlooks the entire city, there was enacted, even though it was past midnight, such a scene of activity that one suddenly awakened to gaze upon it might have been pardoned for believing it must be midday.

First, there were the telephone men who were running wires from the one occupied room in the tower where the aids and assistants of Mr. Yorke Norroy pored over certain pages of thin, tough paper.

The two thin volumes which contained the pages were half of the menacing "Black Book" that had kept Yorke Norroy awake for a month or more, and written therein were the names of half of those among America's bitterest enemies who dwelt within her own threshold.

There were a number of flat-topped desks in the room—one for each corner, each, save the vacant one in the center, where Yorke Norroy would sit when he returned to the scene his orders had wrought, equipped to accommodate two men. Here, facing one

another, adapting for each special purpose an original telegram taken from Norroy's dictation, or copying names from the books, sat Baedeker Bok and Ivison James, Stanley Jarboe and Charles Petersham, Carson Huntley and Ulric Ulm—all those of the underground corps who had played parts prominent or otherwise in the capture of the Black Book—Huntley himself directing their various endeavors and from time to time casting anxious glances toward the door by which the chief would return.

Besides the telephone linemen, running their wires from this room to the others in the suite, and connecting them up with others from below, were the employees of the telegraph company, employed on a somewhat similar business. While ever and anon the servants from the St. Anthony Club staggered up the spiral stairway that began where the elevator left off; some their arms full of manuscript records brought from the club, others lugging favorite ornaments, smaller pieces of furniture, rugs, tapestries, and other fixings—most of the articles that had made up the furnishing and garniture of that "private library" at the St. Anthony Club, which was in reality Yorke Norroy's private office. Here, all of the important records had been kept and most of the important business transacted.

It had required little more than Norroy's ordinary foresight—which, needless to say, was equal to many times that of the average man—to realize that this, or indeed any part of the club, was no safe place to transact business now that he and his corps held the

key to German espionage in America. That what he had expected had come to pass was evident from the fact that, on the previous day, he had leased the tower of the highest building north of lower Broadway.

"For," he had explained smilingly to-night to his subordinates, "if they are going underground we must go as far in the opposite direction as we can. We must have a place where we cannot be surprised, where we hold the approaches, so to speak."

It was to this end that two agents, borrowed for the night from the department of justice, patrolled the platform where the elevator service ended, demanding identification from each man who would pass upward; while on Delaroche Street a detail of bomb squadsmen protected the St. Anthony Club, on the lookout for any hostile invaders who might fall into their hands—a fact of which poor Max Spiegel was unaware as he approached that building.

But long before Spiegel came the telephones had been set up in the tower and the telegraph instruments began to click. While, on the door of a room just below that one in which Norroy sat, a sleepy painter and gilder was ornamenting the glass panel of a door with the following legend in Gothic script:

Bureau of Missing Articles.

Concerning this same legend, the night editors of the New York newspapers could have told you more. Although Yorke Norroy, on that particular night, knew less than Muhlenberg and Krafft concerning the whereabouts of the two remaining volumes of the

Black Book, he could not afford to remain in such a state of ignorance for long.

"What," he had queried suddenly of Carson Huntley as their taxicab bowled them toward the Tower building, "are the two prevailing characteristics of humanity, Carson?" Then after an impatient wait he answered himself: "Cupidity and curiosity, aren't they?" Again without waiting to be answered he gave the order which had resulted in the sleepy painter and gilder being summoned to ornament the door of that tiny, cell-like room that opened off the tower's spiral staircase with a legend in old English black letters. The room, also at Norroy's orders, was provided with a telephone which bore a totally different number from that given the switchboard upstairs now in the course of installation.

That same telephone number, added to the above legend, appeared in the scribbled script which, handed in by the languid-mannered, lackadaisical secret agent to the night editors of the leading New York newspapers, caused them considerable excitement.

The first night editor had simply shouted: "What? Run this on my first page? You must be insane! We do not run advertisements on our front pages. This is not a country newspaper. And besides it is nearly midnight. The front pages have long ago been made up. Run *this* across the entire lower part of the page? Yes, you are crazy!"

Silently and covering a yawn, Mr. Yorke Norroy felt within the pocket of his impeccable dress coat and handed over a folded paper. Although there was as

yet no official declaration of war, its letterhead read: "War Board Committee on Defense," and authorized "all patriotic citizens of the republic to aid and assist the bearer in any way or by any means possible," going on to declare him charged with certain important matters having to do with enforcing the secret regulations concerning alien espionage—"for the defense of property and the lives of the citizens of the United States of America——"

If there were any men who were aware of the impending war in which America was soon to engage, it was the same night editors, who published far less than they knew, entirely reversing the old custom of journalism. So, with a sigh, the first editor departed skyward to where, in company with the make-up man, he unlocked and picked out pieces of the great "forms" that stood ready to be transferred to the presses, until the four lower lines of each column of type on the first-page "form" were eliminated, if comparatively unimportant, changed and condensed in company with those above them, if more important, and, if absolutely essential, transferred to other forms as per the "continued on page——" that replaced them.

Then, to the horror of superintendent and foreman, there grew in their place across the entire page the following advertisement:

???

??? HAVE YOU FOUND SOMETHING ???

THE BUREAU OF MISSING ARTICLES,

Telephone Madison 0101,

Will Tell You How to Get the Most for It.

It was nearing press time before Norroy had concluded his business with the last newspaper on his list.

He sighed in relief, and returned to the Tower Building, where the painter and gilder was finishing his task. While, down on the "Directory" of the building, in white-enameled letters,, another artisan had supplied the information that the "Bureau of Missing Articles" was on "Floor 40-A, Room 1," it did not add that Room 1 was likewise the only room and Floor 40-A only a little niche in the wall opposite the spiral stairway that wound up to the tower.

A scene of busy confusion greeted him as he put foot within what would, by the same reckoning, be Floor 40-B, Rooms 1 and 2. Norroy's aids were trained for every emergency, so it was not surprising that Stanley Jarboe should be seated at the newly installed switchboard, an operator's receiver clamped over his head, busily thrusting in and out the ivory keys that connected Carson Huntley and Ivison James with the various long-distance "exchanges" they requested one after another. Nor that John Baedeker Bok should be operating a Morse key with such proficiency as he transmitted his own messages and those of the others to the central office, which in its turn would send them broadcast over America to those whose duty it was, among others, to apprehend those tainted with treason. Meanwhile, Petersham and Ulric Ulm copied out addresses and compiled messages busily, as previously instructed by Carson Huntley.

"You must spare me Petersham, Carson," said Yorke Norroy. "Wammell and Furnival should be

here before morning. You wired to Washington for them?"

Huntley nodded.

"Well, turn over what you are doing to James. I want both you and Petersham to understand what we are doing in the matter of the two missing books. Come below."

He waved them down to the little office below. The lights switched on, it was revealed furnished according to his orders with a desk, a telephone, a couch behind a screen, and very little else. The telephone, however, instead of the usual bell, had an annunciator, which, when the number was called, would boom like a church bell.

Briefly Norroy explained about the advertisement which would appear in every New York morning paper.

"And this"—he waved his hand—"is the Bureau of Missing Articles, and you, Carson, are the chief thereof. It will be impossible for any one in New York to avoid seeing that advertisement, and before noon to-morrow I am sure one or both of the finders will phone—whether actuated by honesty or dishonesty doesn't matter. Therefore, as I have a hard night's work ahead of me, I want you to go home and get some sleep. I want you, Petersham, to sleep here. You will, of course, call Mr. Huntley up for instructions, Petersham, and you, Carson, will get in touch with me if you can. I will arrange to have two of the others ready to be called, if necessary. Now—go home! And return here by nine o'clock. You, Peter-

sham, can run along, too, and bring back some clean things for the morning."

With which Norroy returned to the tower, and Carson Huntley, after explaining his progress with the work of warning the authorities as to the names contained in the two volumes, departed for his apartment just off lower Fifth Avenue, being doubly careful to wind the alarm clock which should awaken him at eight. But whether or not it was because that extra carefulness was too great a strain, or whether the alarm machinery had grown old and decrepit or whether Miss Fortune willed it that Charles Petersham should come to handgrips with the men who had robbed him of his right to become an officer and naval constructor in his country's service, certain it is that at half after nine the next morning Charles Petersham was awake and alone. He had been awake since eight, had completed his toilet with the aid of the running water in the stationary stand behind the screen, and had attired himself once again in the style he had assumed from copying young naval officers in mufti.

Since then he had smoked numerous cigarettes and had wondered what kept Carson. He was a trifle weary of this occupation when to his delighted astonishment the bell boomed out its challenge.

He seized the receiver and almost shouted his "hello" into the transmitter. A girl's voice responded with a question as to his identity. He quoted the sign on the door.

"Then," said the girl, "I want to ask you——"

But no matter what she wanted, some one else

wanted otherwise. Despite the fact that her hand was doubtless clapped over the black mouthpiece, he heard confused quarreling. And the other voice was that of an old man! It was high, querulous, protesting. Then suddenly he heard the connection cut off.

He called again and again, but to no purpose. Then banging the receiver against the hook, he called his "Central," and whispered to her the phrase that put her at his orders; the phrase used by treasury agents, those of the department of justice, and his own corps, adding to it an imperative order.

"Very well, sir," she replied.

In another moment he had the required information. "The number is Setauket 10-J-8," she said. "Was that all?"

"The address?"

Followed another pause. "Asbjornson, Cove Cottage, Setauket," came the answer.

Petersham thanked her jubilantly. Then he raced up the spiral stairway to the rooms above. At one desk, Baedeker Bok dozed. Wammell, a short, stocky fellow, formerly a treasury agent, was at the Morse key. Furnival, studious in his black-rimmed eyeglasses with long black ribbon attached, was phoning.

It required less than a moment for Petersham to give his information and blurt out his request to Furnival. He pointed to Bok.

"Let him stay by the telephone. Huntley will be here any moment now, and the bell will wake Bok if necessary; it's meant to wake anybody. Meanwhile,

I can investigate. It takes several hours to reach Setauket, remember."

Hardly waiting for Furnival to give permission—which he did somewhat dazedly and hardly understanding—Petersham pushed the sleepy Baedeker before him and below. Then seizing his special-service automatic in its arm holster and adjusting it, and slipping on his fur coat and cap he ran downstairs, and rang for the elevator.

In the car that came up stood Carson Huntley. Explaining breathlessly and giving his destination, Petersham stepped in as Carson stepped out, the elevator door slammed, and Huntley, cursing all alarm clocks, went upstairs to telephone Yorke Norroy.

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH I HIDE THE BOOK, AND PAY A TERRIBLE
PRICE FOR ITS POSSESSION

(BEING THE NARRATIVE OF CLOVIS CLARKE, CON-
TINUED)

OUR house, near Setauket—my stepfather's and mine—had been a cause for surprise to many, and doubtless will to more, for it is built over what our Scotch gardner, Tom, calls a "burn"; a streamlet that runs between two rocky little hills and empties into Cranberry Cove, the waters of which in turn mingle with those of many other arms of Setauket Channel and Port Jefferson Harbor. This is separated from the sea by a long, narrow strip of white beach and dun marshland, which runs its way between two lighthouses, a distance of some six or seven miles. Cranberry Cove is an indentation just opposite the center of this lonely stretch of land and water, and at high tide our house is almost on an island, for the channel overflows the marsh on either side of us, while beneath our main room rushes the fresh water of the little stream.

A more secluded spot one can scarcely imagine. For

neighbors we had only wild fowl. To these the lonely stretch of flooded marshland was a sure bait, and here many remained even in the winter, no doubt because few places gave so great an abundance of the food they liked best. One could thread one's way in and out of the lagoons in the marshland for hours, and in summer, when the tall grasses and rank vegetation grew high, one could get completely lost within hailing distance of home.

The presence of the birds was my stepfather's reason for building his house in so strange a spot and in building so peculiar a one. For, as I have said, part of it was directly over the "burn"; that is to say, while our sleeping quarters were on solid ground on one side, and the kitchen, dining room, laundry, and smokehouse were on the other, the upper stories of the two wings were joined together by an arched, bridgelike piece of masonry, its foundation imbedded in the burn side, over which was a large room with sheets of plate glass forming the greater part of its side. There were steep, sloping roofs of slate stone whose eaves overhung half of the great glass windows and ascended from them to a height of fully fifteen feet. Between the interstices of the slates on this great central roof, of which the roofs of the other wings were but smaller copies, my stepfather had been at pains to cultivate moss and lichens and certain small plants. In fact, to make these roofs as much as possible like those in Scandinavia.

For my stepfather was a Scandinavian himself, Asgard Asbjornson by name; his avocation that of

ornithologist. Particularly was he known as the chief living authority on long-billed, long-legged birds of the stork family. He had devoted his life to the study of the stork while at the University of Stockholm, which study soon led him to include the heron, the crane, the bittern, the egret, the shoebill, the goliath, and many more.

Specimens of some of these dwelt either in the great room above or in the burn below, the space beneath the bridge being a sort of gigantic cage furnished with sides of steel netting from above and dammed below. Some of the more domesticated birds, especially storks born in captivity, were allowed to make their nests alongside our chimneys. It was for their benefit the moss and little roof plants had been grown as in their native North. Stepfather had imported the storks, and I must say that most of them died.

All was quiet about our house on the night we returned to it after my adventure in Van Corlear Square. It was snowing, however, and we had been hard put to it after leaving the train to keep to the narrow road that led to Cranberry Cove, almost all the way along the side of a steep hill. It was growing bitterly cold, and stepfather was too concerned with the proper temperature of his precious eggs to bother much about the book we had found. Once we reached the house he hurried to the aviary and inserted them in a setting stork's nest. The birds set up a harsh clamor at our entrance, and my particular pet, Sigrid, a young stork who had yet to know any place but the aviary, came

pecking at the place where the pockets of my house gowns were and which usually contained cake crumbs for him.

Altogether, there was much to occupy us, so step-father said never a word about the book that night. I examined it before retiring, and found it to contain nothing but names, each carefully catalogued under its proper initial and each in a different handwriting. The ink in which some were written was faded; that of others was as fresh as if they had been written but yesterday.

After I had turned out the light to live over the exciting scenes of the night before, I went to sleep with the book under my pillow, and dreamed about it—one of those queer, jumbled dreams like the pursuits in the early moving pictures, when the scenes change suddenly and without any essential reason.

When I awoke I found I had overslept and that Tom McNab, our gardener and handy man, was just returning from the village. The snow was getting so deep, he explained, that he had thought it best to go for the mail and for some necessary provisions before the road should become impassable. Even as it was, it had taken him an hour to make the return trip—a matter of but six miles.

He brought the morning paper, which had just come as he was leaving, and after I had superintended the getting of breakfast I came back to the roaring fire in the dining room and sat down to read of the world war. For I was even then an active partisan of the Allies, and one of my great grievances against

stepfather was his insistence that we should remain neutral, like his beloved Sweden.

I had hardly folded back the paper to the first page before my eye detected something unusual about it. Nor was I long in discovering that this was due to the big, black-lettered advertisement at the foot of the page:

THE BUREAU OF MISSING ARTICLES.

The size and blackness of the type caught my eye, as I know now it was meant to do. Almost inevitably my mind reverted to the book I had found. It was of no sort of use to me. No doubt it was to those to whom it belonged. If *I* had seen this advertisement, surely its owners would do the same. And as it would be a matter of great difficulty to duplicate a book written by so many hands, the owners would be glad to pay a substantial reward. No doubt this bureau would be able to increase the size of it.

The money would be very welcome to me, from whose income stepfather begrudged even the price of a new hat. I stepped to the telephone, asked for the number given by the advertisement, and waited impatiently to be connected. Just as an answering "hello" came and I had started to ask a question, my stepfather appeared at the door and asked me sharply what I was doing.

I covered the receiver and told him.

"Put it down!" he said. "You can call them up later, if necessary. Not now."

It showed that he had been giving the subject of the book more thought than I had supposed.

"If the book is valuable, let the owners make some offer for it," he said shrewdly. "If we rush to them with it, they will think they can get it cheaply. The longer it takes to find it, the more reward they are likely to pay. And if I had an extra hundred or so I could buy three rare and excellent specimens that I saw yesterday—three not in my collection. Put down the receiver!"

I responded angrily that I had found the book and he had no right to appropriate the reward to buy new birds, even before I got it. Then, remembering I still held the receiver, I hung up; for stepfather was advancing toward me in a determined way that I knew of old. He is a perfect tiger where his aviary is concerned.

Even though my attempt to tell the Missing Articles man seemed unsuccessful at the moment, it was a fortunate thing for me I tried it. As you will hear.

"Get me that book!" said stepfather in his most commanding manner. And so accustomed was I to obey that I immediately quitted the dining room and went to mine, where I took the book from under the pillow. Then—I will never be able to tell why—I paused.

Let no one ever deny telepathic influence in my presence, for it was nothing short of telepathy that made me do what I did. Seven enemies and one friend were, at that moment, making their way toward Cove Cottage, and the minds of three at least were intensely

concentrated upon the missing book—two for evil, one for good. In no other way can I explain the curious shudder that went over me as I plucked the book from under my pillow. The shudder was followed immediately by a warming glow.

Under the influence of the latter, and almost mechanically, like a sleepwalker, I caught up something and went downstairs. I think I have said that our sleeping quarters were on the opposite side of the burn connected with the dining and living rooms, kitchen, and so forth by the stone archway over which was the aviary. Below my bedroom and his, on the ground floor, was stepfather's study, library, and workroom generally—which I was strictly forbidden to enter in his absence. But now, disregarding his ukase, I stepped through this sanctum and unlocked a door that led to a little porch sheltered from the storms by the sloping side of the hill.

This porch, being on the far side of the farther wing, was hidden from the view of my stepfather in the dining room, whose windows looked down upon the now frozen burn. Before leaving my room I had drawn a heavy jersey over my head, put on a pair of fur-trimmed gloves, and caught up my skates. The hillside was free from the snow, it having drifted downward; so reaching the top was easy as was descending the opposite side.

Here the entire sweep of the frozen channel glittered before me like dullest blue steel; for it was a gray, sunless day. I might have skated straight to Port Jefferson had I wished, for Setauket water had been

frozen for a month or more. But I did not need to go so far. Not half a mile away, its entrance hidden by a thicket that grew down below high tide, and beneath a steep promontory crowned with cedar and pine, was the entrance to a little cave which in summer served as a base for my swimming. Here I had conveyed a small locker, where I kept my bathing suit, towels, and soap and one or two other articles—including some cigarettes, which I had never the courage to smoke in any one's presence.

The locker key was on the key ring with the house keys and on the end of a double silver chain swung round my neck, the ends tucked in at my belt. It required but a brief time to strap on my skates, make the half-mile trip to and from Piney Point, where I hid the book. I returned to house and to dining room, secure in the fact that the mysterious book was locked away where no one could get it except myself. The entrance to the cave was securely hidden, even with the foliage gone from the bushes. I myself had discovered the cave only by accident.

My stepfather was fretting and fuming. He would have gone to my room to fetch me had I not made his favorite biscuits, and, as these must be eaten hot, he had remained. He had no suspicion that I had been out of the house, for I had replaced my damp shoes with dress pumps and had rubbed rice powder over a face made rosy by my outdoors experience.

"What have you been doing?" he fretted.

"Hiding that book where you can't find it," I answered him squarely, and sat down to my breakfast.

Then, as I realized I must have a reason, I added: "It's not fair you should take all the money for the reward—if there is one. Unless I get at least half of it, I shall not tell you where I hid the book."

He looked at me, opening and shutting his little gray eyes; he is a little gray man all over, is stepfather. But he saw I had the whip hand, so said nothing.

The silence remained unbroken but a short time, however, for the sound of sleigh bells outside sent him skipping from dining room to living room. The latter is in the extreme rear of the cottage—although it is the front, as far as visitors are concerned—and faces the road that winds along the steep hillside overlooking the channel until it debouches inward and is lost to sight among the firs and cedars back of the cove. Through these it is again seen, white and shining, alongside the frozen burn as it emerges from the evergreens in full sight of Cove Cottage.

Evidently the sound of sleigh bells had been carried to us by the cove echoes while the sleigh was yet high up on the hillside, for when I ran to see there was no one in sight. So I returned to finish my breakfast, and as I was inordinately hungry—thanks to my skating trip—I allowed the nearer approach of the bells and the subsequent entrance of the strangers into the cottage to go until it was too late. For just as, amid the sound of voices, I caught the word "book," and was about to arise and investigate, the heavy door of the living room was shut tight and locked. And as all the doors in our cottage are thick and heavy, and fit snugly into their arched doorways—like those

seen in Swiss chalets or those of any other cold and mountainous country—it was useless to endeavor to listen at the door.

So I waited, impatiently drumming my heels against the tiles of the fireplace, until, after some fifteen minutes, the door opened and my stepfather led one of the men to the telephone in the dining room. He made no move to introduce me, nor did the man make known his knowledge of my presence, but stepped to the instrument and asked for Riverside 08679. He spoke in English, and I had no reason to believe it was not his native tongue. But when he was informed that the party he had called had left for his downtown office, he swore suddenly and fiercely in German, although under his breath; then asked the exchange for another number.

There was something peculiarly unpleasant about this man, although I could not name it. There was little to make out as to his appearance, for he wore a heavy fur coat and a fur cap which came down over his ears, while a pair of motor goggles was drawn low over his eyes. Hence, most of his face was hidden.

When he was connected with his second number he shifted so sharply to German that I did not follow his first words. But, having acted as Stepfather Asgard Asbjornson's secretary so long, and as much of his correspondence with learned societies in Scandinavia is carried on in German, I had kept up and improved my boarding-school knowledge of that

tongue, both written and spoken—for stepfather dictated most of his letters to me.

"This is Knatchbull," I heard him say now, although it was not until afterward that I learned how to spell this name, which sounds so differently when spoken in gutturals. "We have located the book. But we showed ourselves too eager to get it, and the old man wants five hundred; won't take less. We haven't half that much. Arrange to have your bank telephone the Second National at Port Jefferson three hundred. *Immediately*, d'you hear? We will drive back to the village and wait for it. Waive identification. No, no trouble—*yet*. No, the old fellow has no idea of what he found. We were too eager, that's all. Only Muhl-enberg and I in a sleigh; the others are at the village inn with the two cars. I don't imagine we'll need them. Well, make haste——"

This conversation left me in a state that can be better imagined than described. When the man turned I turned also; I had no wish that he note the emotions his conversation had aroused. Better he should imagine I understood no German. As for Stepfather Asgard, he had returned to the living room to continue a conversation with the other man; so he heard nothing.

The two took their departure, promising to return shortly. It was all I could do to restrain myself until I heard their retreating sleigh bells before bursting into the other room to tell stepfather what I had heard. By now I had a lively suspicion—as who would not, with the newspapers full of spy plots—as to the sinister

significance of that book. I remembered now that mostly German names figured in it.

But the prospect of the five hundred dollars which would so materially augment his aviary had destroyed poor stepfather's mental balance. I prefer to believe that he had been a trifle unbalanced for some time, as are most victims of monomania. He listened to me impatiently as I told him what I had heard.

"Nonsense!" he said roughly. "You are making melodrama, miss. I do not believe a word of it. Where is that book?"

"It's where they won't get it, anyhow," I returned, stirred to anger. "Shame on you, stepfather. These men are doubtless enemies of the United States, and you are willing to play into their hands for a few hundred dollars. What kind of an American are you?"

"No kind," he returned hoarsely. "This European war has made an end to that sort of foolishness. There are no Americans; only Englishmen and Germans and Frenchmen twice or three or four times removed."

I was staggered by this frank confession. That it represented a spirit by no means uncommon the newspapers are verifying every day.

"What is this dollar-worshipping country to me that I should care for it?" he demanded. "And, anyhow, I disbelieve your story. Give me that book."

"I will do nothing of the sort," I said, and retreated before his advance. As I was fleet of foot than he, I gained the upper story and fled through the bird house, the storks and herons setting up a raucous

tumult as I slammed the door behind me. Before going to my own room, I locked the aviary door behind me, which gave me time to don my ducking boots and other winter gear before unlocking the door. Stepfather had been rattling it to no avail, and at its sudden opening he stumbled in. But I was downstairs and out by the little porchway before he had picked himself up.

I continued my flight until I reached a footbridge over the frozen burn, which I crossed, and came out among the evergreens. My absence would enable stepfather to ransack my room and find nothing, and I would be absent when the men returned. Now for the first time I seriously determined to do what I had often considered doing—breaking it off altogether with him. After all, he was nothing to me, and I was only a convenience to him—a housekeeper not only without pay, but who *paid*—paid him the little income mother had left me. Moreover, I was of age now, and he no longer controlled me.

I was so absorbed by these reflections that I emerged from among the evergreens without realizing it, and had become momentarily deaf, it seemed, for a strange young man's sleigh was almost upon me before I heard the sound of bells. At sight of me he pulled up—he was driving the hired vehicle himself—and addressed me, asking where was Asbjornson's.

"Why?" I parried.

He eyed me closely, and I had time to discover that he was a singularly attractive young man of the best type we Americans breed.

"Are *you* from there?" he said.

My manner must have betrayed me, for he added swiftly, his sentences tumbling out one after another:

"You aren't by any chance the girl who picked up that book, are you? I do believe you are! Well, then, my search is over. For when I tell you *why* I want it you'll hand it over without a word. You're that kind, I know. Get in, won't you?"

He made room beside him, and before I had done much more than admit that I was the girl he had poured out the story of the Black Book, which, I have been given to understand, will have been already recorded before my story is read.

It confirmed my worst suspicions, and I readily promised what he requested. But then I bethought me to tell him about stepfather's bargain and the men who had gone to the village bank.

"They are apt to return while you are waiting for me to get the book," I said, in high feather that I, a mere girl, was having a chance to become a character in so thrilling an affair—I, whose life had been as devoid of active incident as an oyster's. Besides, when I had assented as to the book, this very attractive boy had seized both of my heavily gloved hands and had raised them to his lips—which may have been very silly, but is the sort of silliness we women adore.

He agreed it was likely they would return as soon as possible. "If I could hide my horse and sleigh somewhere——" he began.

I knew the very place—an old, dismantled shack in a near-by gorge, out of sight of both road and house.

The boy leaped out and stripped the bells from the sleigh so that the sound would not be carried to stepfather, and then drove where I indicated. When the horse was within the half-ruined place, he rubbed it down vigorously and covered it with blanket and lap robe.

"But you," I said doubtfully, "where will *you* hide while I return to get my skates and go after the book? It is quite some distance."

He asked me to describe the construction of our house, and when I did he opened his eyes in amazement. He said he had never heard of anything like it, and I agreed sorrowfully that it had cost enough to build. Then he considered:

"Suppose you go in as you came out and leave the porch door open behind you. Then cross over and keep your stepfather engaged so that he won't see me when I approach. Then I'll slip in and hide on the stairs or above." He paused. "That is," he added, "if you don't mind. Then, when you return with the book, you can hand it to me, and I will see it goes where it belongs. But about yourself," he went on, rather troubled, "you'll get into hot water over this, and although I don't see what else you can do—if you're a loyal American—well——"

He peered at me anxiously, and I was overjoyed that I should interest him sufficiently to trouble him.

"I had already made up my mind to leave," I answered quickly. "Anyhow, I would have been in just as much trouble if you hadn't come, for I would never

have handed over that book to those others. But we're wasting time. They may be back any minute."

We did as we had arranged up to a certain point. If only I had told him just where I had put the book, how much trouble would have been spared us! But in my haste I said only that it was hidden some distance away.

Stepfather had descended to wheedling, finding that threats had no effect, and when he had promised me half the reward—a promise I knew he would break—I pretended to be convinced.

"All right; I'll get it," I agreed, and was about to go out again when sounds reached us from over the snow. Stepfather rushed to the front room and I after him. This time there was a reason why I did not hear the newcomers before they left the hills. There was neither sleigh bells nor sleigh. There, in plain view, only a rod or so from the house, were my enemies advancing. But this time they had plowed their way through in two big, closed motor cars. As they came to a halt some distance away, five others besides the two who had visited us before leaped out and stood about in the snow.

I turned to run, but stepfather caught and held me. "Give me the book!" he demanded for the fortieth time. All his humility had vanished. "Give it to me!"

"It's—it's not in the house," I gasped. "Let me go and I'll get it."

"You'll stay right here," said he grimly, "until I get that book. I know where it is; you have it on

you. It was not in your room, and it is not likely you left it anywhere outside."

There came a ring to our doorbell. My stepfather called for those outside to enter, which they did. There were two of them, as before, and the one who had talked over the telephone came forward, shaking off the snow, and placed a packet upon the center table.

"There's your money," he said. "Now let us have a look at what we get for it."

Meanwhile, the man was not indifferent to our attitudes, for it was plain that stepfather had been holding my hands and that I had just broken away from him. As he turned to the table, I made a movement to reach the door, but he was before me.

"She has the book," he said sullenly, seeing that my mind remained fixed.

"She has it," he repeated, "and I'll tell you truthfully, gentleman, I don't think you'll get it. She has some insane notion that the two of you are German spies, and she refuses to give you any aid whatsoever. What aid this book may be I do not know, nor does she. But there the matter stands."

Yes, and there he stood, too, eyeing that packet of money as greedily as one of his storks might eye a fat fish.

The man, Knatchbull, as he had named himself, turned slowly toward me. With an air of the utmost politeness, he doffed fur cap and motor goggles and addressed me. I saw his dead-white face and strangely shining eyes, and grew suddenly alarmed.

"Miss," he said, but thickly, as one who restrains

rage, "are you not satisfied to believe that book belongs to us?"

"Whether it does or not, you shall not get it," I answered doggedly. "As for you," I turned to my stepfather, "I have remained with you because you were an old man and needed me. But this very day I leave this house for good."

"Surely you were not thinking of going before you restore our book?" asked Knatchbull silkily.

I replied that I was.

"Then I am sorry," he said. But he did not sound as if he were sorry, and his teeth snapped. "I should dislike to search you——" he began again. "But——"

"Even if you did—if you dared," I answered, "you would get nothing. The book is not in this house. It is where you will never get it."

"So long as no one else gets it," said Knatchbull, with the same silky snarl, "that suits us exactly. But we shall be compelled to assure ourselves that no one else *does*. We have two excellently equipped cars outside. Now I propose either that you accompany us or tell us here and now the whereabouts of our property."

The other man, to whom my eyes had turned for the first time, now faced me, and I gave a little gasp. *It was the man I had seen on the street corner the night before.*

Knatchbull had advanced upon me as he spoke, and I was giving back, trying to still the shriek in my throat. For the first time in my life I felt fear, actual, heart-stopping fear. I could not explain the

fear. It was the sort one has in nightmares. And as I backed to the door and he reached for me, the shriek came—an ear-piercing one.

“Tam! Tam McNab!” I called. “Tam! Help!”

The other man was quick to act. He flung open the door, put two fingers to his mouth, and whistled shrilly. At the same moment, old Tam, who had heard my shriek from the kitchen, came running through the dining room. Just as Knatchbull reached for me, I turned and ran almost into Tam’s arms.

“Tam,” I sobbed, “help me! Help!” And I ran behind him and around the dining-room table. Then I saw Tam throw up both hands as I turned. Knatchbull had drawn a pistol, which he held pointed toward him.

“Get out of here, my man!” he said in that same silky way. “And think yourself lucky I didn’t fire this time. Be off with you now!”

He came at him, and Tam, thoroughly and completely intimidated, backed before him and out through the swinging doors to the kitchen, where I had a momentary glimpse of the cook’s ashen-white face and arms fallen helpless to her sides. Knatchbull stepped past him, locked the door, and pocketed the key. I heard the scrambling of many feet, and saw that the other doorway was crowded with men, six of them including my active enemy’s companion; for the most part undersized, pasty-faced men with wide, ugly grins.

Only the boxed-in stairway that led upstairs remained as an avenue of liberty, and to reach that I

must pass them. But now, and too late, my stepfather took it upon himself to interfere.

"Gentlemen—gentlemen!" he began in his high, quavering voice. But they heeded him no more than they would a fly. Several pairs of hands caught him and forced him in a chair, a number of voices advising him to keep his seat and keep quiet if he knew what was best for him.

"One of you get outside and see those servants don't make any break to get away," said Knatchbull harshly. "Now, miss, which is it to be? Shall we take you with us or will you give up the book?"

I told them I would not give up the book.

"Very well," he said. "Now forgive me if I don't take your word, but I am going to search you. If I do not find what I want you go with us. Take hold of her, two of you—you, Wagner, and you, Berthold! Hold the little vixen tight. We'll soon see whether she's lying or not."

To his credit I will say stepfather's gorge rose at that. He was on his feet in an instant. But a brutal blow from one of the men who had come forward sent him sprawling.

I seemed to be smothering. I had read of such happenings in the newspapers—the maltreating of women and old men at the hands of the Teutons. But I had *read* it. No doubt I *thought* I believed it, but actually understanding something from undergoing it is far different from "believing."

Stepfather, with an inarticulate protest, raised himself on hands and knees. Then the latent brutality

in the others had an object. A thing happened that made me try to cover my face with my hands, forgetful that each hand was pinioned.

Another of the men aimed a vicious kick at the old man's head. He aimed accurately. Stepfather fell flat on his face, gave a convulsive movement or two, then lay still. At the same moment the man who had kicked him pitched forward also on his face. He also lay still. I could see the others stare, astounded, about them.

Then, if only the ethics of the Anglo-Saxon would have permitted, the boy who had fired the shot might have remained in the darkness of the boxed-in stairway. It was evident that with a silencer on his weapon he could have killed as many as he liked before they had an idea of where their enemy was. But no! He must show himself now, his pistol held before him, as he stepped from the stairway to the room.

"You dogs!" he cried. "Do you think this is Belgium that you can treat old men and women that way? Let go her wrists before——"

But instead, Knatchbull whirled around on him. He had enough personal courage, I must admit that much. The boy dodged back to his stairway. He dared not fire at Knatchbull when I stood directly in the line of fire. My enemy had no such reason for staying his hand, and I heard a suppressed groan from the stairway; but before the nearest man could reach it he, too, stumbled back, clutching at his breast.

The second man got nearer, but not very. Again I heard the low whine of a bullet from overhead, and

the second man flattened himself against the side of the wall, his face as white as milk, his knees sagging under a weight hard to uphold. Presently he, too, slid down and lay still.

But, meanwhile, Knatchbull acted. Throwing over the center table and pushing it before him, his pistol thrust out at one side, he poured shot after shot into the darkness of the stairway. I heard a strange sound, then the senseless body of the boy came slipping down the stairs and lay sprawling near that of stepfather's.

Of what happened after I have only that remembrance one has of dreams—bad dreams. I was handled and hurried and finally hustled into the motor car. Once there, overcome by the horror of it all and by my impotent hate for its perpetrators, I fought like the vixen Knatchbull had said I was.

CHAPTER V.

TELLS HOW YORKE NORROY FOUND A WOUNDED BOY TO TELL HIM OF A KIDNAPPED GIRL

IT was hardly half an hour later that Yorke Norroy, with his assistants, arrived at Cove Cottage to find that the frantic cook and gardener had finally secured a doctor and were still endeavoring to connect with the local constabulary. From their lips, particularly the gardener's, he heard as much of the story as they knew. Neither old Asbjornson nor young Petersham was dead, but the man was in worse case even than the boy, the doctor said gravely, though the latter had been probed for three steel-jacketed bullets and there were signs that several more had passed through his body. Yet he had youth and health to help him through, while the old man had neither, and the kick from the heavy boot toe had resulted in a fracture to which diagnosis, after a closer inspection, the doctor added concussion.

The fingers of Yorke Norroy tightened until the skin over his knuckles was strained. He arose and tramped the room. Carson Huntley turned from staring away into nothingness, and noted his chief, wondering what the world, that knew Norroy only as an

idler and cynic, would say to this grim-faced man whose features were drawn so ominously as he sat by the boy's bed.

"I'm responsible," Huntley groaned. "That damned alarm clock!"

But Norroy did not seem to hear him. He sat like a man of stone through the long hours, and it was evening before he relaxed sufficiently even to speak, and then only to refuse the supper that had been prepared.

"You go, Carson," he said; "you and the others."

So it happened that, when young Petersham awoke in the dark to the realization of his terrible pain, it was Norroy who prepared the injection of morphia which gave him relief from torture; it was Norroy's hand, as gentle as a woman's, that put a cooling drink to the boy's hot, fevered lips.

"Who—who——" gasped Petersham; then sank back with a great sigh, for Norroy, shielding Petersham's eyes from the light with one hand, held the momentary glow of an electric torch to his own face.

"You—chief—you? Thank God!"

"You must be quiet, boy."

"I can't be quiet until you know."

"Be quiet until the medicine eases you, anyhow. Then you shall talk, boy, if you like."

Norroy's hands felt cool and fresh as they held Petersham's, hot and dry. The boy lay back until the merciful drug deadened the worst of his pain, until he seemed to float, disembodied, between the

ceiling and the bed. His clutch on Norroy's hands seemed all that held him to earth.

The cooling fingers of one hand were passed over the feverish forehead; the boy still clutched the other. Then, in the darkness, Norroy heard the whole story. And as he heard, it was he who clutched the boy.

When Petersham had finished Norroy gently released him and crossed the room. Not once did he cross, back and forth, but a full twenty times. And when Carson Huntley entered again he found his chief standing in the room's center, both hands held taut to his sides.

"Yorke, Yorke!" said Huntley in an excited whisper. "News from town! I had Furnival on the phone just now. It seems the police have been trying to steal a march on us. The squad caught a man carrying a T. N. T. bomb last night and trying to get near the club with it. Without letting us know, they took him to headquarters, and, I suppose, gave him their vicious third degree."

"Which, for once, was much too good for him," said Norroy grimly.

"Just what I thought. It's providential, because it's a thing we wouldn't have done ourselves."

"We would now. After this," said Norroy, nodding toward the boy on the bed. "After what happened here, well——"

"He's confessed to being a member of a league——"

Norroy waved his hand wearily.

"But wait," said Huntley hurriedly; "that's not all. He has also admitted that he was an employee of

Henricus Voegel, and that he received his orders there. What do you think of that?"

Huntley's voice rose in triumph. Norroy was instantly alert, eager-eyed.

"Has this been kept quiet?"

"No one knows but the captain in charge of the bomb squad. He found himself over his head after that confession. Voegel holds a pat hand in politics, controls Lord knows how many German-American votes. The captain knows more than he wants to. Enough to lose him his official head if he acts, I'm afraid, with an election not far off. Damn these cheap politics! So he's put it up to the department of justice, and they've just phoned Furnival, asking how this affects us and how far we've gone."

Norroy's eyes had narrowed.

"Have them hold him incommunicado in a cell, Federal detention quarters," he commanded crisply. "Let it seem to leak out through the newspapers that an unknown man, carrying high explosives, blew himself up while trying to escape from the bomb squad in the vicinity of Delaroche Street. The river's near there; have it supposed to happen while he was headed for the river—have him nearly reach it. That will relieve any apprehension on Mr. Voegel's part as to State's evidence. Henricus Voegel, eh? His name must be in one of the books yet to be found. So far we've only unearthed subordinates, it seems. Henricus Voegel!"

He arose and took Huntley's hand.

"Henceforth," he said, again glancing toward the

bed where the boy slept. "Henceforth, Carson, it's a personal affair between them—and me!"

And Carson Huntley, meeting his gaze, never before remembered so much menace in the manner of Mr. Yorke Norroy.

BOOK FOUR
HIS COUNTRY OR HIS LIFE?



CHAPTER I

THE MAN WHO FLED FROM HIMSELF

ETHAN VAN CORLEAR had been plodding the streets since sundown, hands thrust deep into his pockets; his fingers were pressed hard against the lining. Had he lifted the soft Tyrolese hat, which, when bought in the Alps, where men wear such gear, and at a time when his spirits were in accord with it, had sported the cockiest kind of a cock's feather at the back, another indentation would have showed a red line just above ears and brows, for the hat was never meant to be pulled down so savagely and so low. And, though it was midwinter and a sullen, lowering sort of day, with ever and anon a cutting breeze that sent the snow sliding down slanting roofs and dispersed it elsewhere, Van Corlear wore both coat and overcoat open that he might better thrust those hands deep in those trousers pockets, from which he had not removed them since the sun had set.

For it was at this hour that he had come tearing forth from the front door of that house built when Van Corlear Square was the Van Corlear estate. It had been the Van Corlear "bouwerie," or farm, in the old Dutch days when Manhattan still wore knickerbockers.

The Van Corlear "mansion" which replaced the old New Amsterdam farmhouse was the only home Ethan had ever had, or was ever likely to have. He occupied the same attic room under the eaves that had been his at the age of eight, when they transferred him thence from the nursery. It had been his at eighteen, when he had returned home from "prep" school with high honors to read law with his father and his uncle, as his brother had done a few years before. Then, in good time, both were to make good the inference to be drawn from certain gilt letters, the first of a flock on similar signboards attached to either side of the carven pilasters of an ancient office warren on an old street, the rear windows of whose upper stories overlooked the Battery and both rivers:

VAN CORLEAR & VAN CORLEAR,

Attorneys—Solicitors.

Executors East River Estates.

Such a sign had first shone forth bravely bedecked in gilt, an even hundred years after His High Mightiness Peter Stuyvesant first originated East River Estates to be "executed." Then there had been a yew tree before the office windows and gardens to many of the houses, and after "Van Corlear & Van Corlear" appeared the now vanished "Barristers of the Middle Temple." That had disappeared when "Van Corlear & Van Corlear" moved into their present quarters, built around a garden in imitation of one

of the old London Inns of Court, each office, after one entered the main door and crossed a corridor, facing a gay pleasaunce of green in the center, a stairway to every two signs leading to an upper story.

That was how old "Van Corlear & Van Corlear" was. Which is older than any one now alive. Third, fourth, and fifth floors had been added to the old "Inn" just before Lincoln's election, and just after the birth of Ethan van Corlear's father, who was Elam van Corlear, the fifth, as Ethan's brother was Elam, the sixth. The eldest male Van Corlear was always Elam, the second son Ethan, and the two brothers, or three or four as might be, were always "Van Corlear & Van Corlear."

The sign, we repeat, still read "Van Corlear & Van Corlear," but there was only one brother in it now and that one was not he who since sundown had hurled himself across the face of New York, hands pressed hard against his pockets. No, despite his brilliant record at St. Paul's, the ease of his admittance to the New York bar after an exemplary showing at examinations, his auspicious start, Ethan Van Corlear, the sixth of that name, was, technically, an outcast, and Van Corlear & Van Corlear had never been notorious for outcast alliances.

Yet the name of Ethan, the sixth, had surpassed that of all the other Ethans; of all the Elams, too. Not only for his brilliant work as a lawyer, but for reasons utterly extraneous to his membership in the firm. Ethan, the sixth, it had been who had brought out, **anonymously**, at **first**, that extraordinary series

of stories concerning the New York of other days which some said surpassed both in verity and in art similar effects by Irving. From these had been made, in collaboration with another, the play, "In Old New York," which, after being played everywhere in America and Europe, had been studded with songs and, as an operetta, played everywhere once again.

Ethan van Corlear, the sixth, Captain Ethan Corlear of the "Dandy Seventeenth"; Ethan the author, "the man who had everything," as somebody had said, and said truthfully, "wit, family, social position, fame, and his feet formally set upon the road to riches." But that was the trouble! Ethan had too much and he had got it too easily. And, as easily as he got it, he lost it.

His story is the story of too many brilliant youths who, having crowded a decade into a year, think they can crowd a century into a decade. After his play's instantaneous and incredible success, too many managers wanted plays from Ethan van Corlear, too many ladies aided and abetted the author to preen his peacock plumes, too many boon companions filled the cup already full to overflowing, too many.

The wit that once came without effort soon required the wine that once was only a foretext for graceful toasts. The wine was soon succeeded by whisky. When whisky is hourly needed to whip up flagging spirits and deaden an aching head, the end is soon in sight. And the end, for Ethan van Corlear, began in the sanitarium.

After drink came drugs. And now was the real

end—the end of ends. Earlier in the day on which we take up his tale, Ethan van Corlear had seen himself rehabilitated, dying in Mexico at the head of his company, his faults forgotten, his virtues revived and made immortal—only to be refused by the surgeons as “physically unfit” for active service, and discharged from the national guard on the eve of his regiment’s departure for “the border.”

The examining surgeons had not given the real reason; but, deep down, Ethan van Corlear knew they knew. And so Elam van Corlear was to represent Van Corlear & Van Corlear abroad as he now represented it at home. Both bits of bitter knowledge and their cumulative concomitants had been the cud that Ethan van Corlear was chewing before the study fire, when his elder brother, in uniform, passed him, laid a consoling hand on his shoulder, then departed upstairs to pack.

And Ethan, brought raging to his feet, was also about to go upstairs to unpack, among other things, the syringe for the use of which he now felt the insistent urge, the need for the drug it would carry through his veins stirring his listless blood to life again. But, at the very instant when it lay in his hand, charged and ready to use, he was overcome with a violent antipathy for it—this, the cause of his country’s refusal of him, the reason why he could not, in serving a worthy cause, redeem himself.

He had cast the little shining instrument from him, seized hat and coat, and, as has been told, hurled himself into the streets once more to struggle against

this slavery, the shackles of which galled as would those of the most shameful prisoners. Since then he had walked—and walked—and walked.

And now, at last, he was returning, vanquished, to his home in Van Corlear Square, not, it is true, to kiss his enslaver as once he might have done, believing himself richer by her acquaintance; but, unwillingly or not, to yield himself—because he must!

It was then, as he made his way with shoulders hunched high, and head bent low, feet that shuffled and eyes that sought the ground, that something hurtled through the air and fell directly at his feet. He stooped to pick it up as one who does a thing not because he wishes to do so, but because his dulled brain is running in usual channels. He was hardly conscious of brushing aside Miss Clovis Clarke as he stooped; he was utterly unconscious of her as he straightened up and turned the pages of the book he had picked up in the lamplight.

For, when he read name after name and found all German, and had glanced at the house and assured himself it was that one whose inhabitants, alone of all those in the square, were unknown and usually aloof, and, yes, he remembered now, extremely foreign, he snapped the book shut and started off hurriedly.

For once he was the Ethan van Corlear of old, who leaped from theory to truth by a brilliant burst of intuition. Forgotten for the moment—momentarily at least—was his necessity, the load under which he labored. He only knew that it seemed as if the Lord God had given him a final chance to be the almost

forgotten man of yesteryear—unlike the other Ethan—a man his country needed.

He passed his home without a look. That was not the place to go if this book meant what, vaguely, he surmised it to mean. By no means. Where to go he did not exactly know. But not home.

As he half walked, half ran, he was not surprised to discover that some stranger was following him.

CHAPTER II

THE MAN WHO PURSUED HIM

TO Ethan the drug was meat and drink, the love of women, of home, of parents—of everything—all rolled in one. Yes, and also it held the great hate that one who has been worthy has, when, willy-nilly, he loves an unworthy woman; who, crying out against himself all the while, is yet drawn to her side as the steel is drawn by the loadstone.

But the man who, once he had read, surmised so brilliantly and hurried off so fast, was one to whom slavery was unknown; was the true Ethan van Corlear, whom once everybody had known. The change was indeed no less than a miracle; there is but one word to describe it—transformation.

He did not enter the house of the Van Corlears for a very good reason. If the book was anything of the sort he surmised it vaguely to be, then to retreat with it into his own house was only to invite an assault later in the night.

This belief was borne out by the very evident espionage of the man who was in hot pursuit of him; a man Van Corlear had first seen out of the tail of his eye as he passed him at the street corner. Van

Corlear had noted then just such a steady glare as a lurking leopard might have; the glare that would, in the leopard's case, have preceded a leap upon his prey. But it was not just the wisest thing for any man to do on a lighted corner—leopard-like inclined or no; so the man had turned and followed, and was, Van Corlear believed, only waiting for the opportunity to indulge his leopard proclivities.

Something subconscious must have whispered to the old Ethan van Corlear that the mental drive of the moment must soon succumb to sheer physical necessity for his drug. So he acted as promptly as might have been expected of the old Ethan van Corlear. It is possible he did not know exactly what he would do when the three-foot high jars of red and green liquid with the light behind them advertised the old-time chemist's shop of Albert Cornelius & Son—an establishment almost as ancient as Van Corlear & Van Corlear. Such an establishment had stood there when Van Corlear Square was an outlying suburb of New York; when there had been an inn over the way where the stagecoach stopped and let down its ladder.

Van Corlear knew the contemporaneous Cornelius as well as he knew anybody, nowadays; better than he knew most people, for, besides having played ball with him as a boy, it was to Cornelius that he came about this time each day bearing a doctor permit for his daily need of the drug. Involuntarily, Cornelius went back of the counter and began to put up the morphia pellets, to paste on a label to the thin tube.

Van Corlear had followed him back of the counter;

but not to hand over the prescription in his pocket. For the Van Corlear whose part he played for an all-too-brief period needed neither drink nor drugs.

He sat down at the little desk behind the partition. He was screened from the sight of his pursuer in this little sanctum. Grasping a pen, Van Corlear selected an envelope, addressed it to the chief clerk of the office of Van Corlear & Van Corlear on the old street downtown; adding to one corner of the envelope, "Put into safe until called for by Mr. Ethan van Corlear." And, in case this might be overlooked during the slitting open of a shoal of letters, he rewrote these directions on a Cornelius label, wet the mucilaged back, and attached it to the book. This he slipped into the envelope and sealed it. On second thoughts he took the additional precaution of using the red sealing wax with which the chemist made air-tight the tops of corked bottles; dropping a great blob of the wax upon the envelope's outer flap and firmly imbedding therein that which represented all that was left to him of his vanished glory—the great seal ring his Uncle Ethan had worn during over half a century of honorable service to the State.

"When I leave here, Corny," Van Corlear adjured the druggist, "slip out and put this in the mail box on the corner. Promise! It's important!"

The kindly chemist, deeming this seriousness only one of the vagaries of a user of drugs, promised.

"But I mean immediately—as soon as I leave here. I have a good reason for not doing it myself. Promise me you'll do it the minute I leave you."

"Oh, all right, Mr. Ethan," said Cornelius impatiently.

Even in Van Corlear's fallen estate, this druggist and son of druggists could not call otherwise the son of the house of Van Corlear & Van Corlear, which house had been the patrons of the house of Cornelius a century or more. There is tradition even in New York.

Cornelius took the envelope, laid it aside, and, taking up the pen, wrote upon the label of the tube. Mechanically, Van Corlear gave him the doctor's prescription. As soon as the envelope left his hands he was left in a state of transition between the two Van Corlears. And when the tube came into his hands, he sank back into the chair, racked, as before, by his imperative need. Only now it was worse than before; for he had the desire of the previous quarter hour plus that which had accumulated while he had played the part of the Van Corlear of yesterday.

He was torn by a terrible yawn that pried open his mouth as with a pair of forceps. The great gape that ensued stopped his vitals. His mouth remained open even after the yawn had passed, gripped by some power of inanition which made it impossible for him to close it. He sat as one stricken with lockjaw, while great beads of perspiration oozed forth from his forehead and hung there in fatty drops, and the membranes of his eyes were obscured and stung by a stream of salty tears that came without volition and without emotional cause.

Indeed, he sat as one paralyzed, unable to move, to

speaking, hardly to hear. Cornelius' voice seemed to come from some vast distance, from another dimension. Van Corlear could not see him. He could only sit in his dumb, motionless misery—for he had postponed the taking of the drug so long that his heart was beating barely enough to keep him alive. Had he gone on without what he needed a little longer, he would have known first, dementia, then a nightmarish coma, then death. For such a mistress is Morphia, she holds even her subjects' lives in the balance.

"I'll fix you up," Cornelius had said pityingly. He knew the symptoms. He reclaimed the little tube, dissolved half a dozen of the pellets, drew the liquid into a syringe, fitted it with a long needle. Then, unbuttoning Van Corlear's coat sleeve—for he still patronized the sort of tailor who scorns buttons without buttonholes—and unfastening his cuff link, Cornelius bared Van Corlear's arm and rubbed a tiny spot with alcohol both before and after the injection.

As the ebbing blood was quickened by the anodyne, that both quieted the nerves and stimulated them, Van Corlear's lower jaw relaxed, his teeth met. Gradually, he was moved to raise his arm and wipe away the stinging perspiration and tears. Then he closed his eyes until he should be a man again instead of a wretched wreck, one of the many derelicts engulfed by the city's sands of pleasure.

Presently he staggered up, for the strain upon his heart had been terrific; straightened himself and held out his hand.

"Thanks, Corny," he said.

"If only you could quit it, Mr. Ethan," said the other dolefully, taking the hand and returning the remaining pellets in the tube.

"If only I *could*," said Ethan van Corlear, sixth, sternly. "Yes. Well, I've got to quit or die, haven't I? I can't stand much more of this——"

He broke off abruptly.

"Don't forget to mail that as soon as I go out, will you, Corny?"

Cornelius promised again, and, gripping himself with something of his old form, Ethan van Corlear steered a tolerably true course down the aisle between counters laden with the miscellany common to chemists' shops, and went out.

The man was waiting for him on the other side. Hardly remembering there was such a man, Ethan van Corlear made for Van Corlear Square as mechanically as a homing pigeon. But, before he reached his home, he heard the sound of pistol shots and turned toward that other house from a window of which the book had fallen to the bricks. And now from a little distance he saw what few have seen in that quarter of New York—what appeared to be a running fight between men within and outsiders on the pave. True, those of Norroy's corps carried silencers on their weapons, as did those within, but this was not so of the bomb squad, and to the many flashes that lit up the dark, for the street lamp had been smashed, was added the sharp staccato of firing.

Ethan van Corlear turned quickly and retraced his

steps. Whatever this meant, it would be a cowardly act to his mother, his aunt, and his young sisters to enter their house under such circumstances; followed as he was by one of these very men who did not scruple to resort to violence on one of the quietest of New York streets; especially when that man believed him to carry an article apparently of some value, since it had caused him to be followed.

No, while the drug held, he must contrive somehow to shake off this spy. Van Corlear turned and went the way he had come. From the corner of the next street, he could see, in the pool of light cast by the two great jars of red and green, the bareheaded figure of Cornelius returning, no doubt, from the mail box.

Van Corlear took another turn, and made off at a rapid pace. The long chase began.

CHAPTER III

WHAT WAS HAPPENING UNDERGROUND

(AGAIN MISS CLOVIS CLARKE TAKES UP THE TALE)

BETWEEN the chapters of my own narrative, as I understand it, will be inserted the adventures of others who were involved in the adventure of "The Black Book." At least it was so called, although really it was only a black leather case. But if you had seen it on a library shelf, you would have believed it to be one of those uninteresting volumes in black morocco published by Bible societies for Sunday-school gift books and entitled "The Bible in the Levant." All of which was very artfully designed to keep hands off it, should it by any chance go astray. I am sure, so far as I am concerned, or any of my acquaintance, it might have accumulated dust for ages. There would have been no fear of my taking it down to discover that it was in reality only a dummy made to conceal four thin volumes within; all bound in the same way, the thin, tough paper of each covered with the names of the War Lord's emissaries in America.

All this I had learned from the boy who was shot

down before my eyes in his attempt to rescue me; the boy whose name I afterward learned was Petersham, and whose previous adventures in this connection I believe precede mine.

It was this that had been chiefly instrumental in arousing me to such a rage that I put up a perfectly impotent fight against the German agents who had come after the last volume of "The Black Book" which I had found and hidden, and had intended to give to young Mr. Petersham; representing as he did my own country, the United States, of course, to which the book I had found would be of immense value in locating and imprisoning the spies and traitors within our gates.

In the earliest part of my story I mentioned the rather wild-eyed man who stooped and picked up just such another book as the one that came into my possession; and it is he rather than myself whom this section of my story concerns.

But first I must tell how I came to be in the position in which he found me after he, too, became a prisoner.

I have already said that I fought impotently with those who had shot down the boy, especially with the man, Knatchbull—as he called himself—for whom I had conceived a feeling, part hatred, part horror, which was perhaps the strongest passion that had ever dominated me. I felt if only my fingers could fasten on his throat, God would give me the strength to cling to it until I had stifled every breath of air within him. This was sheer nonsense, of course, for Knatchbull was a powerful man and I, although tramping

outdoors and open-air exercise in general had given me more than an average girl's grip, was yet a mere weakling compared to him. Moreover, there were other able and willing pairs of hands to help him, and, in the end, finding I was not to be discouraged by ordinary means, one of them struck me heavily on the back of the head.

I remember struggling back to consciousness, my head hurting horribly, and became dimly conscious of the interior of the limousine that was bearing me off—and faint glimmers of daylight struggling through the places where the drawn curtains of the car bulged a little here and there. The faint rays of an overhead glow lamp showed me a confusion of faces bending over me, among them the hateful features of Knatchbull.

Evidently I had shown signs of returning consciousness, for he was ready for me; their dreadful "efficiency" seemed to be ready for everything. I heard his voice, as from a distance, telling them to hold me tight, then I saw a knife blade gleam in Knatchbull's hand and describe a circle downward in my direction.

No doubt, now that I had come to think it over, it was no more than a pocketknife; for it was used for no more sinister purpose than to slit my sleeve. But with that blade descending and the sudden pain of two hands on either side fastening on me like claws, I screamed aloud. Almost immediately I felt a sharp, stabbing pain in my arm, and my agonized eyes beheld Knatchbull's saturnine face recede from me, wreathed in a smile of satisfaction. Again, now

that I consider calmly, I know that the sharp stab came from nothing more deadly than a needle, the contents of which sent me back to shadow land.

But, as it happened, I believed that I had been done to death with a murderous knife and that the liquid which had escaped from the needle and which trickled down my arm was my own blood. I remember screaming again and again as I thought the tides of my life began to ebb away.

"Her heart is better," said some one in German. I had not heard this voice before my present awakening. But, during the time I played possum, I had heard hardly any other; so many, discouraged expletives had it used, so many directions had it given. I was sure its owner was a doctor.

"What is it?" I heard Knatchbull ask, surlily enough.

"One hundred and fifteen. Not nearly normal. But a little while since it was over one hundred and eighty; faster than I could count it. And then it shot down to forty and began to go lower, which is as bad. You should be careful how you use hypnotics upon people you do not wish to kill. What was it?"

"Hyoscin," answered Knatchbull in the same surly voice.

"Hydrobromide or sulphate?"

"I don't know. There it is."

Silence for a moment; then I heard something fall and roll around in what was evidently paper.

"That is where it belongs. In the wastebasket. I will get you some hydrobromide hyoscin which is effective in homeopathic quantities—almost. Do you

know how little of that stuff of yours is necessary to kill—to *kill*? A tiny quarter grain, no more. One quarter of a grain is death.”

Knatchbull evidently muttered something the purport of which was doubtless as to how I was.

“She’ll pull through, thanks to my administration of cactine. Had I had the good Berlinger type of digitalin, I would have been spared much anxiety. A pest on these Yankees! They have not the delicate drugs we use in the fatherland, and since the British fleet blockades our commerce I must use American products.”

He spent some little time damning American products and America.

The woman, who had been obeying the orders of the doctor, and whom I did not have to open my eyes to know for a nurse, gave a little exclamation. Her hand had been spanning my forehead, a finger on each of the veins on either side.

“It is one hundred now, doctor!”

“Oh, yes,” he responded ungraciously. “I knew her out of danger some time since. I go, Herr Knatchbull; I am no longer needed. And for my sake as well as your own avoid hypnotics and use anodynes. My use to the league is over if I must connive at murder. To-morrow I send you the hydrobromide.”

“But she is not awake yet,” objected Knatchbull.

“Soon she awakens, I promise you. Meanwhile I leave the *fräulein*, who will summon me again if there is need. You can depend upon her secrecy.”

And, giving the nurse some general instructions,

he took himself off. I could hear something clang to after him, something that had a metallic ring.

An iron door!

It was with great difficulty that I kept my face expressionless and my breathing rather hurried as before. The nurse went paddling softly about the room until Knatchbull's return, when the iron door clanged open and shut again. I could hear some low-voiced conference at the other end of the room, which, from what I could judge by hearing, must be a chamber of great size, since people could remain within it, yet be inaudible even when using ordinary low-voiced conversation. Evidently, also, it was dark, for, except when the nurse snapped on what must have been a night-table lamp near by to count my pulse by the wrist watch I had felt brush my face when she busied herself about me, I felt my eyelids exposed to no glare. Had they been it would have been difficult to avoid winking or contracting my brows.

The next I heard was this rather ungracious admission from Knatchbull:

"Yes, I suppose you'll have to eat some time, so you may as well do it now. I'll watch the girl until you get back."

I heard him moving around after the door clanged again, also the click of what my eyelids immediately told me was the lighting of an electric lamp; then came the scratching of a match, after which I smelled tobacco smoke. Evidently from the creaking of a chair, Knatchbull was making himself comfortable.

Silence ensued.

After some moments of restless indecision, I decided that, as the light did not annoy me, the lamp must be shaded and at some distance, since that one the nurse had used sufficed for the part of the room where I lay. Therefore, thought I, as I am in the shadows, he cannot see whether my eyes are open or shut. I cannot tell you why I continued to feign unconsciousness unless it was that I hoped that at some unguarded moment, believing themselves unheard by me, some one of my enemies would let drop some bit of useful information. All of which was entirely subconscious, for I remember remaining dormant only as one remembers the inevitable, the only thing to do. No great credit is due anything but my intuition, therefore, for what I learned by my trick.

But to return to the moment, I now opened one eye the minimum distance one can unveil one's sight if one wants to see. The room was very dark except for a patch of light which was, apparently, behind me, since ahead were only shadows. These presently resolved themselves into a long, low-roofed room. But not quite so low as I first imagined, for I had no more than three feet of head space. By observing the construction of the opposite side of the room, which was narrow although long, I saw why this was so. I was not in a bed, but a bunk, and, opposite me, were two bunks of the same type built into the wall. They were barely visible, however, through two half-opened closet doors; so that evidently these were what are called "press beds," closed in when not in use to represent cupboards. For, when I looked ahead, I saw

that such another door swung out close to the foot of my bunk; another must therefore be at my back, which accounted for the minimum amount of light from the electric lamp reaching me.

This, and no more, outside of the little table near my head on which stood the other lamp, medicines, and so forth, was all I could make out in the room. I saw no windows nor any door. At first, because of the room's peculiar construction, I almost fancied myself in a moving train, then deep down in the bowels of a ship. But, when I held my breath, there was no iota of motion; so I was forced to give up that theory, which I did quite joyfully.

It was bad enough to be kidnapped. But to be smuggled out of my own country was to lose the last vestige of hope. And I had hope enough. I knew from the boy, at the remembrance of whose fate I stifled an involuntary groan, that his superiors in the service knew whence he was bound and would follow him sooner or later and discover the crime committed at Cove Cottage.

Surely they would find something there to send them speedily after me. I had read many tales of the great detectives who discovered clues which told them the whole story of the most mysterious murder and identified the assailants immediately. And from what young Petersham had told me, there was a Mr. Yorke Norroy in charge of this business of "The Black Book," and he was, perhaps, the one man in America of whom all German agents had a wholesome fear.

I was absorbed by thoughts of this kind when there

came a ringing sound from that end of the room where Knatchbull sat. This was repeated once, once—twice—thrice; once—twice; it was as though one struck the door with a small iron mallet. I heard Knatchbull get up and open the door.

“Krafft!” he said suddenly.

The other answered him in an excited whisper. Knatchbull’s voice rose into a roar:

“And you brought him *here*?”

The other spoke louder now, and in the tones of one who defends himself.

“Around the corner in a cab. I didn’t dare go to Voegel’s; there are no dark streets near Riverside. We can carry him into the court and no one will be the wiser. The driver is Schweiss; I telephoned for him and his taxi and he helped me put him in and bring him here. Come, help me out with him. Suppose he comes to while I’m gone?”

Knatchbull cursed him at some length.

“Well, what would you have me do?” asked the other despairingly. “I didn’t dare leave him alone anywhere while I came for help. And he hasn’t got the book on him. I searched him from the skin out.”

Knatchbull asked a question which was answered with concentrated venom and the utmost vehemence.

“Yes, I’m *sure*; certainly I’m sure. Unless *you’re* sure of the other pair who went *your* way. I had seen a man enter the house whom we hadn’t been told about. W’d been told to expect that woman with him—Flora Reyés. So I crept up on the house. So it happened I was near enough to see the window raised

and a firework flung out. I looked up and saw a man at the lighted window. He flung something out. A moment later came this fellow, who was passing one way, and a girl and an old man passing another; both stooped, but it was this man whom I saw in the lamp-light turning over the pages of one of the little books. I followed him——”

Knatchbull gave him no more time. “Come along,” he said. “We’ll have to risk it. You’re sure you gave him enough stuff to keep him——”

At this the iron door slammed and I heard a key turn in the lock. No sooner had my enemies gone than I snapped on the light alongside the table. In its light was revealed halfway across the room and near a writing table a wastebasket just as I had supposed from the sound I had heard when the doctor flung away the vial he took from Knatchbull. In a second I was rummaging therein until my fingers closed on a thin little tube. As I was in a nightdress and none of my clothes were in sight, not even my stockings, I clambered back into the bunk and thrust the tube far down below, between the two halves of a double mattress. My intention at the time was to watch for my chance to put some of this very powerful drug into some food or drink of my enemies. It was a slim chance, but it was better than nothing.

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH ANOTHER PRISONER ENTERS

(MISS CLOVIS CLARKE CONTINUES)

AFTER breathless waiting on my part, I heard the key rattle in the lock and a straight, spear-like shaft of light cleaved its way through the enshrouding darkness, lighting up the center aisle of the room between the two rows of bunks. I saw now what I had not seen before, and what accounted for the earthy smell, that the upper reaches of the room had for roof and walls a sort of soft, chalklike stone, or commingling of clays, which was prevented from falling down by a bridgework of iron stanchions standing upright like pillars, to which were bolted flat, iron crosspieces which extended across the ceiling, if it may be so called. From one of these crossbeams hung a hexagonal-shaped lantern by an iron hook fastened to an overhead ring. Along the walls on gun racks and revolver rests was a veritable arsenal; ugly steel-blue automatics of the Luger type, long of barrel and chunky of butt, and below each a steel skeleton of a rifle stock to which they could be attached, making them the more deadly at long distance. Knowledge

of this, of course, came later; at the time their purpose was unknown to me. Fewer in number were the Krag-Jørgensen carbines, which, standing upright in the wooden racks with their broad blade-like bayonet attachments, looked like a miniature forest of spears. There were other weapons, also, but there was too little time before the ray of light died out to distinguish just what they were.

Determined to continue my feigned sleep as long as I was allowed, I closed my eyes as I heard the men slowly advance into the room. Evidently it was a third man who carried the electric torch, and from what he said, and his eagerness to be off again, I judged that he was a sort of guard, or man on watch; stationed, I supposed, at the entrance of this subterranean region.

Knatchbull growled out permission, and I heard the third man make off, clanging the door. But before he did so, Knatchbull and his companion deposited their burden in the bunk opposite, and knowing their backs must be turned momentarily, I gave a furtive look in that direction.

They happened to be in such positions that they hid the man's body, but left his head exposed, and as it was turned in the direction of the light I saw his face, so ghastly white with eyes so glassy and wide open that I thought him dead. It was apparent he was not, however, for Krafft, kneeling by his side, ear to his heart, gave a relieved gasp and got up. Knatchbull, also, who had been taking the prisoner's pulse, loosed his wrist, grunting something that was

confirmatory of Krafft's action, and the man's hand dropped limp and white against the dark wood of the bunk.

It was evident from Krafft's first words that while they had been out of the room he had told Knatchbull most of the story of his pursuit of the prisoner; for he now took up his tale somewhere near the end, after first giving an apprehensive glance toward me.

They left me for that region back of my bunk where my eyes could not follow them, and, after more striking of matches, Krafft said:

"The whole affair has me puzzled. The man is a mystery. After leading me that merry hell of a chase all over town, a chase that lasted a good seven hours if it lasted a minute, and took me from the Battery to the Bronx, from the East River to the Hudson, from——"

"You've gone into all that," interrupted Knatchbull rudely. "I'm willing to concede that you had a chase of it. But what happened, man, what happened?"

"This!" continued Krafft, his tone somewhat aggrieved: "He must have spent his last cent on the taxicab that he discharged over in Chelsea Village—on Twenty-third Street—for when I saw the taxi stop just as mine was about to turn the corner, I told my driver to go straight ahead and I paid and left him in the shadow of the next street while I went on foot toward my quarry. In that busy crosstown street there were so many people going to work even at that early hour that he didn't notice me. Besides he was

looking for a pursuing taxicab. Anyhow he was deep in an argument with the driver as to the fare.

“‘It’s every last cent I’ve got,’ he was saying as I came up, ‘but if you’ll give me your address, I’ll send you the extra dollar or so. I thought I had more.’ Well, the taxi driver took it finally, and gave him his address; and my man started off on foot to go back the way he had come, still keeping an eye out for my taxicab.

“Now, as I told you, I started after him before twelve o’clock last night and this was about six o’clock in the morning. He started off at a brisk sort of trot, but this died down by the time he had crossed Seventh Avenue to a sort of hurried walk—painfully hurried. He couldn’t manage to keep this up very long evidently, for before he reached Sixth Avenue he sank down on the lowest one of a flight of old brownstone steps and sat there panting and perspiring as I came up.

“Unluckily enough for me, or luckily, maybe, there wasn’t a soul on the street but ourselves and no convenient doorway to dodge into, for this was one of those old neighborhoods with Dutch stoops; so, when he turned his eyes in my direction, I knew he realized he was still being followed.

“It must have come as a disappointment to him, believing as he did that he had shaken off all pursuit, for he got up, glaring at me, goggle-eyed, as sick looking a man as ever I want to see.

“‘Damn you,’ he said, as I came up and tried to pass on, pretending I did not see him. His fists were clenched and he raised them above his head as he

cursed me. For a moment I thought he was going to spring at me and I felt for my gun. But instead of that, his fists went up until he was on tip-toe, then he toppled over and lay as still as a dead man.

"The taxi I had used was still following me at a snail's pace—I had ordered the chauffeur to do so—and now I signaled it to make haste. The street was deserted. It was too early for any but the main thoroughfares like Twenty-third Street to be populated; so the driver and I got him into the cab without much trouble.

"Where to?" asked the driver.

"Then I was in a quandary. I did not know how much this infernal Norroy and his crowd knew. In following this fellow, as I told you, he had led me back to Van Corlear Square, where I saw the attack on our house, and I couldn't be sure how many other of our houses were known to them, nor how many of the books had fallen into his hands. I didn't even know who this man was, whether he was a stranger who just happened to pick up the book—or not. I knew a few moments later when I searched him in the cab and found no book, but I did not know then; so I took a desperate chance and told the fellow to go to my own place.

"As I said, as soon as we drove off, I searched our friend here and found no book——"

"Where was it, then?" demanded Knatchbull harshly.

"That's what I do not know," Krafft replied. "I've told you every step he took from the moment he picked

it up. At first I thought he might have left it at the druggist's, but I found out why he went to the druggist's while I was searching him. Here!"

Evidently he must have held up something for Knatchbull to see; for the other said suddenly:

"Morphia!"

"Precisely," answered Krafft, "and that was what was wrong with him. He had gone too long without it. That was why he collapsed."

I heard Knatchbull mutter something which I could not catch, and Krafft continued:

"Well, we got to my place, and the driver helped me to carry him in. Fortunately, I have the first-floor flat and live in an old-fashioned house converted into apartments and minus a hallboy. As soon as I got him on the bed, I examined the label on this tube and gave the man a dose of twice the amount specified. I knew I was taking a chance of killing him, but a man who had shown his dogged determination in trying to shake me off and who had been clever enough to ditch the book somewhere without my seeing it, was apt to be a formidable antagonist once he was restored to normality. I figured that double dose would bring his heart back to the proper beats and put him into a drugged sleep on top of it.

"Well, that's about all. All day, not daring to slip out for a bite of food, I've watched him, sitting alongside my bed. When he showed signs of coming to at one time, I gave him the same dose as before. Meanwhile, I managed to get Schweiss on the telephone. He has a taxicab and a driver's license, so I directed

him as soon as it was good and dark to come and help me. He did so, and we brought him here.

"And here he is," he concluded, needlessly supererogatory I thought, and another match was struck.

There was a long silence; then I heard Knatchbull laugh. There may be uglier laughs than Knatchbull's, but I hope never to hear them. There was something so sinister about it that I could feel the surface of my skin turning to goose flesh, a chilly, clammy, itchy sensation, an experience none need envy me.

Then he said:

"Well, two of the books are safe enough, at any rate. That girl can't reach any one to tell where she has hidden hers, so even if she keeps mum to us, we're satisfied. As for this fellow——"

And his tone grew hard and ruthless:

"He'll tell us where *his* is, within the next twenty-four hours. Yes, and he'll go down on his knees to beg us to listen to him. That book's as good as in my pocket now, my boy."

"What do you mean?" asked Krafft.

When Knatchbull told him, a shiver shook me from head to toe and I turned my face to the wall. Oh, God, that your creatures to whom you have given souls can sink so far below the brute beasts! That they can, with a laugh, inflict upon others cruelties impossible to the most savage of animals. And as I lay shivering and clutching my sheets, I prayed God to deal with this monster, Knatchbull, even as He had dealt with others of his kind.

I cannot write of what followed. In obedience to

what has been pointed out as my duty, to give the public first-hand evidence that will greatly assist in arousing indignation against alien enemies in our midst, I have related as best I can past experiences for the most part disagreeable to recall, memories that will leave me easier of mind when forgotten.

But this! Ah, no! Let some one who has not seen, only heard, set it down. I cannot! I cannot!*

*Miss Clovis Clarke's narrative is continued in Book V, Chapter IV.

CHAPTER V

TELLS OF A TORTURE TORQUEMADA MIGHT HAVE ENVIED

VAN CORLEAR remembered nothing of what happened from the moment when his spirit called too heavily upon his flesh, when, frenzied by his failure to shake off his pursuer and forgetting his weakness, he had flung both fists in air meaning that they should fall like flails upon the head of his enemy.

As blackness blotted out his surroundings, his last despairing realization was that he had made a mistake to tempt nature a second time after his warning of the night before, when the chemist, Cornelius, had come to his assistance. As consciousness returned to him finally, he wondered who had played Cornelius to him this time, for he felt no pain. He became aware of human proximity, and, after some consideration of the sounds that reached him, was convinced that the some one in question was sobbing.

He opened his eyes. Kneeling by his bunk, her face hidden in her hands, was a girl in a torn silk waist. He could see the rise and fall of her shoulder blades at the point where the silk separated.

He looked around him. His surroundings differed in only one respect from those that had met the eyes of the sobbing girl upon her own awakening. The stands of arms at the rear of the room, and the weapons suspended on the walls above them, had been removed, leaving unspotted places in the film of dust that covered the floor and the wall panels.

Van Corlear coughed gently. The girl looked up. That pang of regret that always seized Van Corlear at the remembrance of what he had lost through the curse that lay heavily upon both his soul and body, took hold of him as her eyes shone up at him like twin stars through autumnal mists.

Van Corlear reached out for the girl's hand; his touch was like ice to her dry, hot finger tips.

"Don't," he soothed, forgetting himself in his discomfort at her grief. Gradually she subsided into only occasional sobs and again looked up at him.

Van Corlear thought her rarely beautiful even with her eyes rimmed with the red of weeping. Her color was that of an old miniature kept beneath glass—that ivory white that has more than a touch of saffron, which causes a wonderful clearness of color; clouded only where faint crimson crept into her cheeks—a rare crimson like the color of a March rose.

Rare indeed; that was the word that best described her, he thought; there was about her nothing that was undecided, whether of color or of feature. Her hair was that rare black that gives to cheeks a rarer whiteness, so that her pallor seemed more than ever that of the same old miniature, yet withal was the un-

clouded pallor of health. The hair was coiled low about the ears framing the face, out of which looked features as small as they were clearly outlined, and the red of her lips was as vivid as the color of her cheeks was faint and illusory. But her eyes were best of all; their blue was the blue found only in the eyes of beautiful women; to compare which to seas and skies is to rob them of a softly sparkling something that has never been seen in either.

Never, save perhaps when her thoughts dwelt upon the death of the boy at Cove Cottage—for she supposed him dead—would her eyes ever be more beautiful than they were when raised to Ethan Van Corlear, eyes that held the tenderness of the Madonna, the Mother Woman to a world of broken, bitter men. And again Ethan Van Corlear was upon the rack of regret. Such a woman might have been for him once.

He checked himself sternly. She had ceased to sob now, and was looking up, unable to answer the question he asked. She could not tell him it was for him that she wept. So Van Corlear, imagining he intruded where he had no right, changed the formula of his question:

“What is this place?”

She told him this time. Told him at length until his eyes blazed. That men should so handle women was an outrage upon his heritage from his ancestors. For, with some vague idea of keeping his thoughts from himself for as long as possible, she had included in her answer the tale of how she had been brought

here, the brutality of her captors to the old man, her stepfather, and the shooting of young Petersham.

"But—they did not get the book?" he asked.

"No! They did not get the book," she answered simply. She did not tell him where she had hidden it, fearing unseen listeners.

He brooded upon it all at length, and a sense of bitter shame overcame him. She, a gentle girl, slender little thing that she was, had successfully resisted her natural fears, still stood out against her enemies despite her manifest helplessness at their hands. Why, if they wished, they could——

He gave a groan, remembering what men of this race had done to the women of Belgium. She knew all this, too, yet she dared withstand them. And he, a man, once a man of sorts, had been found a weakling; had fallen into their hands like some rabbit in a snare.

It was then that the first great fear overcame him. He felt in his clothes for the prescription given him the night before by Cornelius.

It was gone!

He felt in another pocket for the case that held his syringe. It, too, was gone. Such a look must have come into his eyes as frightened the girl, for she gave a little cry. And looking at her blanched face and her scared eyes, he knew that she realized.

"They—they took them," she faltered. "Your—your medicine."

Something in her manner made him eye her sharply. Finding confirmation of his worst fears in the look

she tried to hide, a great dread took hold of him, a series of shudders convulsed him.

He hid his face from her until it was again a face he was not ashamed for her to see—the face of the old Van Corlear.

“Do you understand?” he asked slowly but steadily. “Do you?”

“Yes,” she whispered, and silence fell between them.

Again he turned away from her and dared to face the hideous horror the hours would soon hold for him. In the face of her own heroism, he could do no less than play the man. And yet the deadening knowledge was upon him that the power of playing the man would be presently denied him.

“You say you understand,” he said presently, and very slowly but steadily as before. “But—*do* you? Do you know anything of what I am confronted with? Taking morphia is not like taking cocaine or whisky—or like anything else in the world. To its victims, it is the same as water is to the fish or air to you. When I am deprived of it—and I take it that is what our enemies intend—I will begin to die. If only the death would be over at once, but it is lingering torture. And before death comes madness. And in that space just before I go mad, who knows what I will not do for relief. Twice now, in the last twelve hours or so, I have tried to do without morphia. One result was to fall senseless at the feet of the man who for the entire night I’d been endeavoring to avoid.” He paused. “I suppose he brought me here——”

She nodded, turning away her head, for the muscles

of his face had begun to twitch horribly. Still with averted face and in a low voice she corrected him as to the time. "Much more than twelve hours," she said, and explained where he had been before being brought here.

"So it's midnight again," Van Corlear mused, controlling the twitching of his facial muscles with difficulty. "Then I dare say my captor must have found the stuff in my pocket and administered it, else I wouldn't be here now."

She nodded again; then, suddenly burst out:

"But aren't men cured? Can't they be? It's too awful. They *must* be."

"They are *cured*, what they called being 'cured,'" he responded listlessly. "I was cured once. They used hyoscin——"

"What?" she demanded, her eyes alight. "Say that again?"

"Hyoscin," he repeated, staring at her. "Hyoscin in small doses, along with other things to keep up my heart action, and others for—for a number of things. But it left me half blind and weak as a kitten and without interest in anything. The world seemed a very dull place, for I had lost my grip on everything. Then, if I had been half the man I should have been, I would have gone abroad and forgotten myself in fighting for France—for others. But I mooned about, wretched in soul and body; for using the stuff had unfitted me for anything I used to do. I had become flabby where once I was athletic, listless where once I was ambitious. Nothing mattered. But, worst of

all, I could not sleep, and that was what drove me back to the drug. If only I had been a man," he broke off bitterly, "and gone to France and fought. But all I seemed to think about was how peaceful and restful the days had been when I used morphia; how readily my brain had worked, how——"

He broke off again.

"Yesterday, when I reported at the armory to go to Mexico with my regiment, I was refused. 'Physically unfit' they said, and so I am. Physically and psychically and mentally, and in every other way unfit, as you will soon see. I don't know what in God's name I am going to do. That's the worst of it. I can't trust myself, for I don't know what I am going to do."

"You mean?" she asked, eyes widening.

He did not answer immediately. As he staggered to his feet, a yawn, such a yawn as the girl had never seen, distorted his face. A long-drawn shudder followed; she could see it rippling along the muscles of his arms—his legs—saw him press hard against the floor with both feet.

"You see," he said, his eyes blinded by the scalding tears that followed, tears that yet were not tears; "I'm getting my first warnings. That terrible yawning and shuddering. It feels as if it was tearing apart every muscle in one's body and afterward tying them into knots."

He began to pace the room. She followed him and laid a hand on his shoulders.

"I know you—you are in pain," she faltered; "but—"

but—what did you mean a moment ago when you said you couldn't trust yourself—didn't know what you would do——”

“Mean?” he repeated vacantly. Then, remembering, he gripped himself back to concentration. “I meant that I am not fit to be trusted. Especially with such a secret as I possess,” he said grimly. “I have heard of an ordinarily peaceful man who broke into a doctor's office and killed him to get the stuff he was denied. What will *I* do, knowing I have only to speak to be given what I am beginning to need as badly as that murderer did.”

His eyes held hers. She turned away. Both man and girl began pacing the room.

CHAPTER VI

HOW ETHAN VAN CORLEAR PROVED WORTHY OF HIS NAME

HOURS elapsed before either uttered a word; for the greater part of which she dared not even look at him; and during which there had been no sign of Knatchbull. When he entered at last, that same hateful smile upon his face that the girl dreaded, it was in company with Krafft, who carried a covered tray.

"Here's some food for you," he said.

The girl was not hungry, but anything was better than the monotonous pacing. She turned to Van Corlear, but he had withdrawn to the shadows at the rear of the room and, his back to her, shook his head. She felt a chill at the thought that he feared to let her see his face.

"Perhaps," said Knatchbull, reverting to his silkiest tones, "if the gentleman will not eat, he will take other relief?"

The girl's back was to Van Corlear now mercifully, and she pretended to have an appetite for her food. But she could not keep her eyes from Knatchbull, who, by the long table and in the light of the electric

lamp, was going through a piece of business that she at first failed to understand.

He had taken one of the spoons from the tray and filled it with water which he was boiling over a small spirit lamp. This done he handed the spoon to Krafft, and, when the latter reached into his pocket and took out a small black case, she understood well enough.

Dropping several pellets from the tube into the barrel of a syringe, Knatchbull filled it with the boiled water, then shook the pellets up and down until they were dissolved.

The girl heard a stifled cry from behind her. She flung down knife and fork. Their clatter sounded surprisingly loud in the dead silence.

Knatchbull only smiled at her. Rising, he took off his coat, rolled up his shirt sleeve, and, having anointed a place upon his arm with alcohol, plunged in the needle and pushed the piston.

Followed a sound like the roar of a sudden gale, and Van Corlear, his face distorted out of all semblance to humanity, reached the table, both hands before him clawing at Knatchbull's throat. But only to be confronted by the muzzle of the Luger pistol that Krafft held pointed steadily against his forehead, pushing him back and holding him off at arm's length. And Knatchbull, not moving a step, smiled and smiled.

For a moment—although to the girl it seemed the stress and silence of it would never end—they held these positions. Then, with a bitter cry, Van Corlear crumpled up and sank into a chair, his head and arms flat on the table.

Knatchbull, whose eyes again gained their strange glitter, continued to smile as he spoke:

"That is my tippie, friend, not yours. Cocaine! It sharpens the wits instead of deadening them, as yours does. But I have yours in my pocket, also; and I am quite willing that you should have it, too. You know what I want. The book you picked up last night. Where is it?"

But, although she could see that rippling of his muscles plainly, for the sleeves of his coat were tightened in the position in which he lay, Van Corlear himself did not move. So, when Knatchbull spoke again, he was not smiling.

"Why prolong this uselessly? You *must* give in—you know you cannot hold out. And if I leave this room, I will not return for two hours. Two hours of torture when you can have relief now. *Now! Look!*"

And he held out in his palm a tube marked in red letters "Morphia;" held it within reaching distance. Slowly, as one hypnotized, Van Corlear raised a face so ghastly that, with a little shriek, Clovis Clarke turned away. His eyes encountered the tube, read the lettering. He seemed gathering all his strength for one great spring when, smiling again, Knatchbull pocketed the tube.

"Well?"

Clovis Clarke stole a look at Van Corlear. He was gripping the table with both hands, and they were beet-red from the strain. As he sat, rock-like, a tiny trickle of blood ran from his bitten lips down to his chin. But he did not speak.

"Very well! Two hours more! Come, Krafft!" snarled Knatchbull, turning away.

His companion followed, but more cautiously, backing away, his hand upon his weapon; and the door clanged behind them like some ill-omened bell. And as it closed, there was torn from Van Corlear a sound the like of which the girl had never heard before; at the sound of which she was to awaken from many future dreams, a shriek in her throat. It was a sound that she could liken only to the wail of a lost soul.

She had stood all she was able to stand. Quickly, she ran to her bunk and rummaged therein for the hidden tube of hyoscin. With it in hand she approached Van Corlear. He felt her hand on his shoulder and turned his tortured eyes to hers.

"You said," she gasped, "something about hyoscin being used as a cure. Here is a tube of it. Perhaps it will help you. But be careful. A quarter of a grain is certain death."

She did not understand the look he gave her—that of one suddenly inspired, nor the slow smile that followed it and wiped away the worst of the pain in his eyes; did not understand it —*then!* *

"There cannot be a quarter of a grain here—altogether," he answered her. "It is in fiftieths; yes, there is. Eighteen fiftieths. That is——" He paused so long endeavoring to concentrate on so simple a problem and failing that she answered for him:

"It is more than a third."

"Well, I will be careful," he said with the same strange smile. "But——"

Again he paused.

"It may make me unconscious, and so I want you to know"—he had risen and was whispering—"where that book is. I will write it down for you in case any one is listening. Memorize it, then destroy it. But memorize it carefully, first."

His scribbling covered half a page of paper before he concluded. "Memorize it quickly," he warned. And, as her eyes were concentrated upon it to the exclusion of all else, he took up a glass of water and stood for a second, eyes closed, head bowed, as one who prays. Then with a sudden movement he uncorked the vial, swallowed something from it, and washed it down with water.

He passed the girl who, with brows knit, still studied the slip of paper on which was written the address exactly as on the envelope he had given Cornelius to mail, addressed to his own office—or rather the office that once was his, "Van Corlear & Van Corlear"—with the instruction to the chief clerk to place it in the safe. This copied address was followed by his own name and residence. Came, then, these cryptic words, the full significance of which she did not immediately understand: "*Notify them if you can.*"

She sprang to her feet. Van Corlear was in his bunk, very quiet now. Instantly she was at his side, pointing to the last words:

"What do they mean?"

As he turned his eyes to her, the dread suspicion in her soul became certainty. For his eyes were peaceful now, a faint film upon them.

"Destroy—paper," he whispered out of a dry throat. "Burn."

She knew she must obey, otherwise all had been to no avail. Striking a match, she set the scrap of paper alight, tossed it to the floor, and saw it burn black. Then it was she who was blinded by hot tears—real tears, as she bent over him.

"Let me see that tube," she faltered.

It was all he could do to open his palm. The tube rolled to the floor, corkless—empty.

"Only way," he whispered, so low she could scarcely hear him, for his lips were as dry as tinder, and his tongue seemed to crackle in his parched throat. "Bound to have told them. Couldn't—stand—any—more. It was—my country—or my life. Only—way——"

His eyelids fluttered, drooped. His lips snapped together as if they had been shutters closing by some mechanical device. His limbs straightened convulsively, then fell, rigid. The eyes opened, staring.

But when she looked again, a strange change had come over his face that but a short while since had seemed almost beastlike in its ferocity. About the poor dead lips seemed to hover a faint elusive something that was at once less—and more—than a smile. And the eyes no longer stared, or if they did they had first beheld something which had wreathed the lips about with that smile.

And so, as the dead lips smiled up at her, she burst into an agony of tears and sank down beside the Van Corlear who had proved himself worthy to bear his name.

For now she and she alone knew the whereabouts of two of the books which would give to her country the knowledge of the betrayers by whom it was beset. And she the prisoner of those betrayers—alone in that chamber of death—alone and afraid—afraid——

Had she known what Yorke Norroy knew at that time she would not have utterly despaired.

BOOK FIVE

A LEAF FROM THE KAISER'S BOOK

CHAPTER I

TELLS HOW TWO PRISONERS FARED

IT so happened that in the city of New York, on the night of the thirtieth of January, 1917, there were two prisoners whose lives, liberties, and pursuits of happiness, depended entirely upon what Mr. Yorke Norroy made up his mind to do. One was that certain enemy alien, Max Spiegel, held for his attempt to bomb the former headquarters of Mr. Norroy and other secret agents of the department of state. The other prisoner was that one held by Mr. Spiegel's friends—Miss Clovis Clarke—and Mr. Norroy meant to use Spiegel as the lever that would effect her release—if possible.

Clovis had never heard of Max Spiegel any more than he had heard of her. Nor had Yorke Norroy ever heard of her until that day when that severely wounded young man, Charles Petersham, had rallied long enough to tell him that she was one of those passers-by who had picked up one of the missing volumes of the Black Book, and, being a good patriot, had been about to hand it over to him when certain German agents, chief among whom was the inhuman Knatchbull, had broken into her stepfather's house,

brutally maltreated the old man, and threatened her with like treatment. It was then he, Petersham, had interposed; had managed to shoot down several of the marauders, and had been rewarded by a variety of wounds, any one of which was likely to prove fatal.

The only fortunate phase of the whole affair was that Clovis had not yet gone to get the book. Else it would now be in their hands. That she had hidden it well, and had stoutly refused to reveal where, was proved by her being held prisoner after the house had been literally torn apart in search of it. But unfortunately she had not told young Petersham where it was, either.

Intending, as she had, to put it into his hands in a few moments, it had not occurred to her to say, in her haste, just where it lay concealed; so that, apart from his natural desire to rescue so brave a young lady from captors so utterly unappreciative of her courage that they were apt to make her suffer for it, Yorke Norroy must first come face to face with her if ever he was to know the whereabouts of a good one-fourth of the traitors within our gates.

It was actually a good one-half, but Norroy had no means of knowing that. Had he been aware that the other passer-by who had picked up the second book had also fallen into alien hands, and had killed himself rather than reveal his knowledge regarding the book to any one save Clovis Clarke, Yorke Norroy would have been a doubly dangerous man for Max Spiegel to refuse. It is possible that he might have been unable to keep his hands from Spiegel's throat unless

he gave up the information required; for the added necessity of immediately coming to the girl's aid would have been too much for him to bear in patience the stolid refusals of a stubborn, bullet-headed rascal.

But, although one of her captors only surmised that before he died, Ethan Van Corlear had revealed to her the whereabouts of the other book, Clovis' situation on the morning of January 31st was a hazardous one; as might have been judged by any one who had overheard a certain conversation on the part of her jailer and his companion, Krafft.

It was one of those little ironies found so often in life itself, which is crueller than the most austere chronicler who recreates it on the printed page dares to be, that Clovis Clarke's prison house should have been in full sight of Yorke Norroy as he sat, brooding in his tower, perfecting the scheme that he meant should result in her liberty. More than once his eyes had fallen on the house in question, a landmark of another age—the age Norroy had known as a boy when his parents had brought him to New York on many of their trips—an age of quiet and convention when Washington Square and Gramercy Park were the centers of the fashionable world. The house in question stood on one of the corners of Irving Place, and its windows commanded a view of those clumps of ancient trees beside well-ordered walks bordered by bushes, which is Gramercy.

The house in question was an ancient structure with fanlights over the doorways. Its frontage was not unusual, but it extended along the side street, eked out

by a sheer line of red brick that fell when the house dipped to the garden and rose again when the coach house topped the wall. In the center of this long garden wall, overgrown by ivy and creeper, was set a sturdy iron door; which, shaded, as was the wall itself, by the overhanging branches of the trees from within, and, furthermore, hidden by the sturdy oak between pavement and curb, was always in shadow, and formed a most desirable entrance, night or day, for those wishful of entering without attracting undue attention. As a certain Eitel Krafft most assuredly did when he entered on this particular morning.

Once within, and the iron door shut sharply behind him, Krafft, who had temporarily assumed a footman's livery, crossed the garden and stepped briskly down the steps that led to the basement kitchen. Here another man, who wore the white apron of a chef over livery similar to Krafft's, and assumed for the same reason, took from him the various green groceries he had gone to purchase. Krafft answered some questions pertaining to the breakfast he was to share with his companion who awaited below, and the girl they kept imprisoned. After which he continued his way down another flight of stairs that led to the coal cellar, followed by the man in the apron.

Arriving at the wood bin, which to all intents and purposes was nothing else, Krafft thrust his gloved hand in amid the wood. His fingers fastened on an iron ring which, when tugged at, proved to be fastened to a trapdoor, the raising of which dislodged a large quantity of wood. When Krafft had descended the

ladder underneath, the temporary chef closed the trap-door and replaced the wood over it, grumbling in an undertone at what he considered an excessive and unnecessary precaution.

The passage below in which Krafft now found himself was dark, and seemingly was only a lower coal cellar, for a quantity of this fuel was strewn about in the earthen floor and heaps of it stood in the corners. As the ray of his pocket flashlight fell on the walls, they seemed earthen also, but when Krafft pressed a button in the wall a wooden panel, painted so cunningly that it duplicated exactly the appearance of the other portions of the dirt wall, slid up, disclosing a door of discolored iron. By pressing another spring a circular segment of the door flew back, revealing a dial not unlike that of a safe.

Leaning over and directing his flashlight ray on the dial, Krafft operated two combinations; one of letters which only served to expose a second dial bearing numbers which, in its turn, must be accurately manipulated by its particular combination before the door itself opened.

Even then Krafft had not reached the inmost recesses of the place. The chamber finally disclosed was not unlike a similar apartment underneath Herr Voegel's Riverside Drive mansion—being furnished like the lounge of a club. But, and here Yorke Norroy had partly erred in his deductions: this was one, the only one true, refuge of the league that had no connection with more subterranean regions. No passage beneath connected it with others of its kind. There

were a number of such hiding places that were connected; but, with fear upon him that, now that one of these had been discovered—that one on Van Corlear Square which his fellow spies had fired behind them even before they blew up the underground passage—Knatchbull had deemed it unsafe to trust Clovis Clarke to any save the leaguers' last resort. This was the only safe prison house for one possessing knowledge of so dangerous a character that, if it came to be shared with Federal agents, would spell disaster to any further activities of any of the leaguers.

Knatchbull had always known, and had finally succeeded in convincing Heinzmann, his now disabled chieftain, that this linking together of their fastnesses by underground tunnels, despite its undoubted value in many respects, had also its weak points. True, it enabled them to escape from any one house, was that house suspected and raided; true, it enabled alien enemies wanted by the department of justice, and suspects watched by Norroy's own corps, to go to places like Henricus Voegel's, which they would not have dared to visit openly. But its disadvantages were also apparent—because of the interminable labor and enormous difficulty of digging such tunnels, it had been necessary to limit the zones of their activities to those already undermined by old-time smugglers and by agents of the Colonies in the last century and a half when the British still held possession. An early task of the league, undertaken more than a decade ago, had been to locate ancient maps giving these locations. Then they had rented houses in the quarters to which

the tunnels gave access, and finally, with great cautiousness and almost supernatural perseverance and stealth, had dared connect these tunnels with one another.

But now that Norroy knew of their underground operations Knatchbull knew he would see to it that there would be double shifts of excavators working night and day upon the blown-up tunnel that led from Van Corlear Square. And, although it would take them weeks, maybe months—so long had the leaguers labored before them—to come upon the first house to which it led, they would come to it in time, and that would be the beginning of the end.

All this meant many months, perhaps a year, before the whole system was laid bare—for upon the enemy's approach the mines in the next tunnel would be exploded, and so on; but then Knatchbull had not known how long it would be necessary to hold Clovis Clarke a prisoner. Unless she directed them to the spot where he could find the book, he had meant to keep her there indefinitely.

But the suicide of Van Corlear had altered matters. Knatchbull had an uncannily evil mind, true, but especially when it was sharpened to even more abnormal keenness by cocaine, an uncannily able one, too. And so he now suspected that Clovis Clarke knew about both books. He had flashes like that—flashes that were no less than sheer genius—which was one of the reasons he was tolerated by that extraordinary efficient body of spies, the league, and held such high office among them. The other reasons are not far to seek. No one even in the league was sure of his nationality

—not even whether he was European or American—which made it possible for him to pass as New Yorker, Londoner, or Parisian at will. No Prussian enthusiast working at high tension with the belief he was bettering America by betraying it to Junkerism was capable, in cold blood, of more callous cruelty, nor of inspiring it in others, as his leadership seemed to do. By nature he was cold as chilled steel; he loved nobody and nothing. Indeed, it seemed in him that the average affections of the average human were reversed and that where others loved or had pity he despised and delighted to hurt. There are such creatures. Add to this his indulgence in that wickedest of drugs, cocaine, under whose influence even the most spineless become gangster murderers, and you have a superbrute indeed.

When Krafft opened the second iron door that led farther on underground he came face to face with Knatchbull. Knatchbull was unshaven, untidy, in shirt sleeves none too clean. His bloodshot eyes wandered from Krafft to the girl who had sat, fully dressed, through the entire night on the edge of her bed, staring in sheer horror at the man in whose presence she dared not sleep.

Clovis Clarke had sat so long in the one position, and had stared so unceasingly, that both the rigidity of her body and the horror in her eyes seemed static; as much a part of her personality as the way she arranged her hair. She was a decidedly pretty girl, this Clovis Clarke, Krafft thought, and she had pluck that he was bound to admire.

"I wish to speak to you," he said shortly, putting one hand on the door as if he would draw it toward him and shut out the sight of the girl.

Knatchbull saw what Krafft had not tried to hide. And it pleased him. It always pleased Knatchbull to inflict pain or arouse anger. And though Krafft was his co-worker, and as close to him as a man could be, since both would share a like unenviable fate if caught at what they were at, this meant nothing to Knatchbull. He had no friends or any one for whom he cared a straw. He gloried in it. Nor was there any one who cared a straw for him. And he gloried in this, too.

So he was pleased at the thought that, in doing what pleased him, he had without any extra effort annoyed Krafft. It pleased him even more to reflect that Krafft was helpless to resent what he did not like. For both were bound by their oath to the league to do those things that would most benefit the fatherland. And Krafft could not say Knatchbull was not doing it.

"What has happened?" asked Krafft roughly, and again it gave Knatchbull pleasure. For he was always pleased that nothing ever happened to cause him to lose control of himself while doing things that enraged others. This gave him a flattering sense of superiority.

"I have begun a new system with the girl," Knatchbull replied with the cool, candid brevity of a dispatch. "It won't do to keep her here. We can't spare the place. It's the only really safe place left while those books are at large."

He derived pleasure from his contemplation of

Krafft, who could not deny this. With the house itself, the conspirators had very little to do. They paid its owner for the refuge of his name—it was a name well known in Manhattan—by keeping up the house for him and allowing him enough to pay the dues at those clubs where in his estimation a gentleman could get decently drunk. For something more than ten thousand a year, Killian Duyckinck had sold his honor. The league had taken over the underground apartments and the right to furnish him with servants of their own choosing. This arrangement had the effect of providing them with a refuge that would pass unquestioned to the end. The house remained ostensibly Killian Duyckinck's; they never stirred above the basement floor nor entered by other than the gate to the back garden.

Krafft, in whom at present the Prussian training and habit of mind had been swamped by natural feeling, looked unutterable things at Knatchbull.

"What have you been doing to that girl!" It was almost as if Krafft accused. He had slept comfortably through the night in one of the servant's rooms in the basement, leaving Knatchbull in the room in which they now stood. It was his turn to be on watch, true, but Krafft had thought that meant no more than that Knatchbull should remain below; the girl was safe enough behind iron doors.

"I learned, in India," drawled Knatchbull, fixing his obnoxiously shining eyes on Krafft, "that if one is kept awake three nights running, aroused instantly at

each endeavor to doze, that they would soon be willing to tell what they know. I have seen the plan followed out with indifferently good results, and last night I began it on her."

Krafft kept his temper with difficulty. He was not a bad sort, this Krafft; only mistakenly educated into believing that Prussian *kultur* was so superior to the muddled efforts of the rest of the world to govern itself that, in time, the world would thank even those who had betrayed it into Prussian hands. But all the doubts that had arisen within him since he came to America had crystallized within him since the eyes of this captive girl had denied his existence. The suicide of her companion when Van Corlear feared he might confess under torture to the place where his book was hidden, had hung heavily upon Krafft, too; for it had been Krafft who was responsible for his capture. Taken with that, what he had just seen in the girl's eyes, the look that said she was not in company with her own kind, but with savages utterly alien to all humane or even human understanding, had been like a match to a pile of prepared tinder.

"What will you do when you need sleep yourself?" asked Krafft savagely. "Because I will not be party to any such barbarous scheme."

"Fortunately, my friend, I shall not need you," returned Knatchbull suavely.

He swung out by a cable chain a number of golden trinkets attached thereto—knife, pencil case, other things, among them a tiny enameled box which he

opened, exposing a white powder. He partook of this as old gentleman take snuff.

"It is best the other way," he admitted, slapping a back pocket, where he carried a more elaborate method for administering cocaine. "But this will serve for the moment. This little powder, my friend, enables one to go without sleep for days—for at least a week. So my plan shall not be defeated by your chicken-heartedness. If you have any objections, I suggest you mention them to Heinzmann. He is the only authority my commission obliges me to respect. And if you add, after stating your objections, that my method is sure to produce results in the shape of the location of the missing books, I think you will be requested to attend to your own affairs, of which this, by the bye, is not one."

"What do you mean?" demanded Krafft.

"Have you forgotten that the girl is my prisoner and that the reason for your remaining here ceased to exist when we buried Van Corlear in the coal cellar beyond? I suggest that you report to Heinzmann for further duty. *I* do not need you."

The barrier of Prussian officialdom rose up between Krafft and the answer he desired to make. What Knatchbull said was true; Krafft knew it as well as the gloating Knatchbull, who thought it rather glorious to be able to enrage his companion with such impudent assurance, yet remain wholly within rights and rules that the other must obey. And to appear as cold as

ice, and seemingly devoted to duty, while actually engaged in doing what he enjoyed immensely.

"You will find Heinzmann at Number Three," he went on glibly, "where I suggest you seek him after breakfast. And now"—he yawned—"that I have shown that there is no reason in your remaining in these rooms at all, will you oblige me by going? When you came in I had just begun to believe, from certain questions the girl was too sleepy to answer properly, that your man Van Corlear had told her where his book was. Either that, or some one on the outside knows where it is, and will get it before we do if we do not make some effort to locate it. You followed the man. Now that he is gone, follow his trail until you find something. Here you only interrupt—and annoy me."

He smiled wickedly. Krafft clenched his fists and stepped closer to him.

"Say that again, and——"

"And what?" asked Knatchbull contemptuously, reaching for the upraised hand and pushing it aside. "I am doing my duty. Are you?"

"You're going back and torture that girl?" demanded Krafft.

"I shall keep her awake until I find out whether the plan works—or not. Certainly. Is there anything else you would like to know?"

Krafft's eyes fell before the concentrated malignity of the other's gaze; his threats remained unuttered. Slowly, unwillingly, he went out. For the moment

he felt himself weak. It was only when out of Knatchbull's sight that his courage returned.

"Damn him!" Krafft thought. "If he hurts that girl, I'll—I'll——"

He dared not tell even himself when alone the thought that came to him.

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH NORROY BUILDS A SCAFFOLD TO HANG A HUN AS HIGH AS HAMAN

INCREDIBLE as it may seem to those best acquainted with that estimable exquisite of the department of state, Yorke Norroy, esquire, the first day of February found that gentleman in despair. Not that Max Spiegel had not succumbed to persuasion. With the ingenuity of Yorke Norroy exclusively devoted to his interests, Max Spiegel had weakened and told Norroy about the underground entrances to such league hiding places as he knew.

Norroy had not liked to do it, but other and cruder forms of threats having failed, he had hesitated to play his trump hand no longer. Very late on the night of the thirty-first, he had sent two men to arrest Max Spiegel's son. Him he marched into Spiegel's cell at midnight, marking the occasion with many features calculated to add awe and strike terror to the importunate one, and told him crisply that if the information sought was not immediately forthcoming, he, Yorke Norroy, would hang his son in the little courtyard which his cell overlooked.

Spiegel had not believed this, and had continued to refuse, whereupon Norroy had marched young Spiegel off again—grimly. Then the sounds of hammering began outside in the courtyard, and the carpenters began to knock together a hastily improvised scaffold in the light of the torches. Norroy might have used the dingy electric arcs for the same purposes, but the guttering torches were far more effective.

It had been a preternaturally solemn affair. First came guards carrying more torches, then the chaplain in full vestments, then more guards, and finally the prisoner, carefully keeping his back to Spiegel, who, being three stories away and forced to peer between iron bars, saw none too clearly, anyhow. It seemed to the obdurate old man that his son was receiving the last rites. This went off well enough, albeit it became somewhat grisly; for when it came to ascending the two steps of the rough scaffold, the prisoner shied violently and made futile efforts to escape, which was balked by the brutal guards, who belabored him with their fists, while the officer in charge cut him across the face with his riding whip. All of which was most impressive seen amid the flickering shadows cast by the torches.

It was when the prisoner fell to his knees and seemed to be begging for his life that Norroy had stepped out of the shadows and halted the execution for the moment. But long before he entered Spiegel's cell he could hear the frantic occupant beating on his cell door far down the corridor. Once more in Norroy's presence, he was quite willing, if not insanely

anxious, to come to terms. But, to Norroy's exceeding sorrow, his revelation brought them but a trifle nearer to Miss Clovis Clarke.

But before he heard them, Norroy temporarily increased the national debt by the size of a thumping check which he handed over to Montague Spivins, esquire, director of the Vitanova Moving Picture Company to recompense that gentleman for his services and those of the actors playing the officer and the guards, not to mention him who, attired in the clothes of Spiegel's imprisoned son, had made up sufficiently to resemble him and to deceive his father by torchlight and at that distance. Also for the services of the two stage carpenters who had put up the temporary gallows.

But, Mr. Spivins, having gathered some inkling of the reason of their employment, had returned the check asking only to be favored in future whenever he could fit in, a sentiment that at the time surprised Norroy, but with which he, in common with the country at large, was to become familiar before many moons had waxed and waned.

But all this was of small avail; that is, so far as the rescue of Clovis Clarke was concerned. It was not "small" in the ordinary sense, since it acquainted Norroy with another headquarters of the league. But, it appeared, that was the only place of which Spiegel was cognizant; the house with which that of his employer, Henricus Voegel, was directly connected. What other houses it might be subterraneously connected with, Spiegel did not know. And as he held fast to this the while he believed his son to have his neck

in a noose, Norroy was forced to credit him and to send the pair of them to be interned in the South.

A day and a night had passed since then, and, although a close watch was kept on both places—Voegel's and that other on West End Avenue of which Spiegel had apprised him—Norroy's watchers, duly relieved, brought no news. No one had entered or left either house who had not a good, legitimate reason for doing so—Henricus Voegel himself, the owner of the West End house, one Kleinschmidt by name, a wealthy brewer, the families and servants of both houses. Besides those who watched the houses, there had been detailed on each block a sufficient number of department-of-justice agents to follow every one who came out and to report their destinations and their reasons for seeking them.

More than that; in the two books filled with the names of German spies and already in Norroy's possession, there had been written down the names and addresses of no fewer than three hundred and ten league members residing in New York alone. To keep track of these ladies and gentleman had been no easy task; it had required not only all the agents of the state department and the department of justice at Norroy's disposal, but central-office men and members of private detective agencies also.

So, on the night of February 1st, three hundred and ten absolutely useless reports, so far as Clovis Clarke was concerned, had been handed to Yorke Norroy. It was with these suspects as it had been with the others.

It was after the lengthy labor of going over these reports that Yorke Norroy, as has been chronicled heretofore, despaired. But not for long. As may be evidenced by the letter received on the following day by a certain Ludwig von Meister, a prominent Chicago pork packer then domiciled in New York City. The letter was brief, and ran as follows:

DEAR SIR:

I have found a little book containing your autograph and address as well as those of some five or six hundred others. As the book is beautifully bound and contains so many autographs, it must be of great value to the owner who had the patience to collect so many of them; so I thought perhaps I had better notify one of the persons whose names are in it.

I found it while duck shooting yesterday at Setauket. It had evidently fallen out of somebody's pocket, for it was half-buried in the sand above high-water mark. If you know whose it is, please notify the owner and he can have it if he will call at 1100 West Seventh Street, on the undersigned.

RICHARD MAHONY.

This letter, casual as it seemed, was the result of much thought on the part of Mr. Norroy. In the first place, the home of Clovis Clarke was near Setauket, and, as Knatchbull and his friends had turned her house topsy-turvy in their endeavors to locate this very book, it would likely occur to them that the book was hidden somewhere on the outside. In the second place, the fact that the writer said that he had found it "half buried" would accord well with the first conjecture, since had she buried it hurriedly she would not dig deep and the recent rains, might have washed away the top covering of the hole. In

the third place, the fact that each name and address was in a different handwriting made plausible the assumption that it was valuable as an "autograph book" on which many people, with nothing better to do, set great store. As for Richard Mahony, he was, to all intents and purposes, an unsuccessful young lawyer; there was no one out of the service who knew him for a Federal agent, and, hitherto, an unimportant one.

All in all, it was just the sort of letter that a kind-hearted young lawyer with lots of time on his hands would write, and although the leaguers would be on the alert for a trap the chance of recovering one of these inestimably valuable books was too good a bait to be overlooked. To begin with, if the leaguers could know that at least *one* book would not fall into enemy hands, whosoever had his name in that book could breathe relief on its recovery, and at least six hundred of them would be free to continue their activities, as free from suspicion as before.

They could not know, of course, that Ulric Ulm, Baedeker Bok, Furnival, and Wammell sat up half the night on which the Mahony letter was posted, copying the names of the book to be used as bait into another, so that none of its value to the government should be lost. It was one of those same two books Huntley Carson had picked up in Van Corlear Square when he should have found the entire four.

"In fact," said Norroy sadly as he thought of Clovis Clarke, helpless in enemy hands, "even if it does not get us what we want, it will give this lot of them

fancied security, which will make them less careful where they go and to whom. And as all of them are under surveillance, we may get at our real objective in a roundabout way. But I hope the way will be shorter—as we think it will.”

Needless to say, Mr. von Meister was accorded considerable attention from the moment his morning mail reached him. There waited in the alley at the rear one agent in the guise of an itinerant vender, offering sweetmeats at stable doors and back-yard entrances. Another was in the offing in front, while a third sat fitted out with a metal cap receiver, waiting for him to lift his telephone. Not that he or Norroy, who had put the cap on him, expected Mr. von Meister to do anything so foolish as to telephone. But in the case of one who was not an agent by profession, only a pork packer, all sorts of unexpected things must be expected and provided for.

But Mr. von Meister was not quite that foolish. He was, however, foolish enough to believe that he was able, even if watched by clever agents—and he did not know whether he was or not—to throw them off his trail. He emerged from his house with that belief firmly fixed in his mind. He did not seem to think that there might be more than one person watching him—if any.

His trick for evading the attention of the one possible person was, to say the least, clever. And had there been only one, he would have succeeded. But there was that itinerant vender of sweetmeats at the back, and when that gentleman—who was none other

than Stanley Jarboe—saw Mr. von Meister's second car put forth from her moorings only five minutes after the first one had gone off, he had a taxicab near enough to keep the second car in sight as it sped off toward the lower city.

The man who had followed Mr. von Meister in his sky-blue Daimler, and who was our old friend, Van Gruenberg Luyties, had wondered why the driver had proceeded at so leisurely a pace. He did not know that this was to give Von Meister's second closed car, which had started five minutes later, time enough to reach Astor Place first. But Luyties, never having seen the second car, did not connect the two; even when, quite naturally, so it seemed, they managed to jam themselves so closely together that, had it not been for their running boards, their paint would have been badly scratched.

Side by side, the car containing Von Meister, and the second car, containing no one save the chauffeur, wedged their way until a traffic block was called. Then, so quickly that it was over in an instant, and went unseen by any save the driver of the vehicle immediately to the rear, a hand reached from the window of the sky-blue car and opened the door of the second car. Whereupon the first door opened, and, head and shoulders bent low, Von Meister stepped across both running boards and into the second car, a dull crimson Mercedes. So adroitly did he manage it that his head hardly showed above the open doors of both cars.

As soon as he was safe within the Mercedes, he tapped on its window, then shrank back into its depths,

and Driver Number Two warning Driver Number One with upraised hand, both reached out and shut their open doors at the same time and with almost military precision. And the wondering drayman who looked on said: "Blast me!" And several minutes later: "Well, I *am* blasted, blast me if I ain't blasted!" Which, for him, meant that he had been stirred beyond explicit profanity.

None of this had been perceived by Mr. van Gruenberg Luyties for the good and sufficient reason that to avoid the appearance of pursuit he did no more than keep the sky-blue Daimler in sight, and was therefore half a block away and having all he could do to keep there, for he was driving his own roadster and was not an overskillful driver. Nor was it noted by Stanley Jarboe, who, in the shelter of his cab, with curtains drawn, was removing the last vestiges of the vender's attire, and had left the spotting of the dull crimson car to the minor department-of-justice agent who drove the pseudo-taxicab for him. Directly between this and its quarry was interposed the bulky body of an omnibus that plied between certain distant car lines and the department store in whose interests it was employed in lieu of a cross-town car line. This omnibus effectually blocked Jarboe's driver's line of vision, but it did not prevent him from following the crimson car as before.

Hence, despite all his cleverness, when Mr. von Meister's Mercedes turned off Lafayette Street and back uptown again, finally drawing up before an old house in the district where semiaristocratic West End

Avenue widens into the vulgar wastes of Tenth Avenue, Stanley Jarboe followed in the taxicab and drifted by at the same time that Von Meister, in a heavy coat of broadcloth, with an almost priceless sable collar, emerged from a car which Jarboe had had every reason to believe untenanted.

The dull crimson car drove off immediately, and Jarboe, instructing his driver to cruise about a bit, presently had the pleasure of seeing Von Meister emerge in company with another man, whom he seemed to be instructing. Telling his taxicab driver to keep him discreetly in sight, Jarboe followed the pair on foot. They entered the subway, and, close behind them on the stairs, Jarboe saw a letter pass from the sable-collared gentleman's hands into the other's; the hands, although Jarboe did not know it, were the blunt-fingered ones of Eitel Krafft.

Jarboe entered the section of the train next to theirs, keeping close to the door, so that when the fur-collared gentleman's companion showed signs of leaving at Eighth Street, Jarboe was able to follow him. He did this somewhat doubtfully; he was not sure the fur-collared gentleman was not the more important. But undoubtedly he had seen a letter given the other, and the address of Richard Mahony was near Eighth Street, and Jarboe was too accomplished a student of the methods of Mr. Yorke Norroy to fail to correlate the two.

He was joyful indeed when he saw that he had done the right thing, and a little later was announcing this fact over the wire to Mr. Norroy himself from

a little tobacco shop across the street from Mahony's apartment house, which Jarboe had just had the pleasure of seeing Krafft enter.

Norroy was fortunately not far off. He was at his headquarters in the tower of the tallest building north of Park Row and overlooking a certain square. Here he sat, like a field marshal in his tent, a good half dozen telephone receivers in easy reach, one after another tinkling every few moments as Furnival thrust plugs in and pulled them out of the switchboard in the next room. Frequently that morning, Norroy had held intermittent conversations with five agents at the same time, at points whose distance from him varied from a minute's walk to a day's railroad journey.

"Carson," Norroy called, "take charge. Call Mahony up. We've drawn our badger. He's at Mahony's now, Jarboe outside. Telephone Mahony to keep his man there on any pretext until he hears motor warning number two from my horn below."

The car into which Norroy leaped, and which was kept for his especial use, seemed no more than an ordinary taxicab. Conspicuous cars, in common with conspicuous persons, were not best qualified for keeping watch upon others while remaining one's self unobserved. But an expert in motor engines could have told you that this one belonging to the shabby taxicab could do its ninety miles without serious consequences, and, at a pinch, could pass the hundred mark, yet keep to the road. It is, therefore, not surprising that it covered in so surprisingly short a time the distance between the square in which the tower stood and the

house of Mr. Mahony, an old brownstone front of early-Victorian architecture, built when apartment houses were the exception rather than the rule.

Norroy himself doubted the wisdom of undertaking personal supervision of this affair, but he had visited the bedside of young Petersham, as was his custom early morning and late at night, only an hour before, and the grave look of the great surgeon who had finally found it necessary to operate, and the lack of recognition in the glassy eyes the delirious boy had turned to the man who, above all others, he loved and revered had revived anew in Norroy the desire for personal conflict with those responsible for his state.

As the car swept by Mahony's house, the driver touched the button which communicated with the horn, and, strident and shrill, like the shriek of a hawk, came the code warning. And although the car went its way, turning the corner in such a wide curve that it seemed it would be blocks away before it stopped, actually it had hardly passed from the sight of Mahony's windows before Norroy was on the pavement, and Jarboe, who had also heard the awaited signal and had hurried after the car, had joined him.

A little later, Krafft made his exit from Mahony's house, wearing a look of such supreme satisfaction that Norroy hardly needed the touch of Jarboe's fingers on his elbow. The spy turned toward Washington Square. Norroy followed at a respectful distance. /

But it was not the Norroy whom everybody knew, not by a great deal. All cars used by the corps had false panels fitted in their walls which, when they

slid back, revealed all that was requisite for many complete changes of identity.

Therefore, the man who parted from Stanley Jarboe resembled just the sort of man one expected to see in the vicinity of Washington Square—a dark-visaged fellow who once, in his native Sicily, might have worn earrings and whose lemon-tinted shoes, and necktie that looked as though it was a part of Joseph's coat, intensified his swarthiness. Just the sort one saw by hundreds in Little Italy, just south of the square; the prosperous owner of a news stand or small fruit store. To further carry out his identity, this person was whistling "Funicula," whistling it so raucously, indeed, that the man he was following quickened his steps to be out of earshot of the horrible noise.

But even this did not serve to destroy Eitel Krafft's good nature. He patted the pocket that held the precious book. He was pleased on more accounts than one. For, if this was the book that Clovis Clarke had hidden—and it seemed there could be no doubt of that—then there could be no reason for keeping her a prisoner any longer. Above all things, he wanted to look into the very blue eyes of Miss Clovis Clarke without that film falling between them and shutting him out as if he had never existed.

The shrill whistling of "Funicula" did not bother him. In fact, as he neared Irving Place, he began to whistle softly himself. And thus it was, through certain unexpected emotions on the part of a not thoroughly Prussianized martinet, Yorke Norroy got more than he bargained for when he started to follow the

recipient of the book in the hope of discovering the main headquarters of the league; for had Krafft gone there, as he was expected to do, Norroy would have been as far off from Clovis Clarke as before.

CHAPTER III

TELLS HOW THE LAST OF THE VAN DUYCKINCKS DIFFERED FROM THE LAST OF THE VAN CORLEARS

IT is impossible to explain the art of following another without being one's self observed; "tail-ing," the underworld calls it. If the average unskilled person attempts it for even a short period he is promptly detected. In the first place, such a one would be betrayed by that telepathic current which causes one to turn one's head and stare directly at any one else after a certain amount of that one's undivided attention. The adept in shadowing overcomes this without realizing the psychological import of how he does it; forgetting entirely the person he shadows, so engaged is he in making himself inconspicuous. How he does this he alone knows. It is a matter of experience.

In the present instance, Norroy counted upon Krafft's conviction that Richard Mahony was no more than he claimed to be. Why else would he have surrendered the book, which was genuine beyond the shadow of a doubt. As Norroy expected, Krafft, as well as Von Meister, had been uneasily aware that he was putting his head into a trap when he had anything

to do with Norroy's note. Besides, as Norroy did not count upon or expect, Krafft was too concerned with the possible fate of the girl he loved—he freely admitted it now, his love—and too elated over recovering the book that would free her to bother about anything so farfetched as a belief that he himself was under surveillance. If this was so, why had he not been apprehended long ago?

It is not surprising, therefore, that Yorke Norroy was not half a block away when Krafft entered the rear garden of the Duyckinck house.

Norroy could hardly believe the evidence of his eyes. Killian Duyckinck a traitor? It was unbelievable. From the moment that the secret agent could no longer doubt its truth a red wrath took possession of him. He forgot his customary caution; forgot everything except that, if such as the last of the Duyckincks was in league against the country his forefathers for three hundred years or more had helped to build, then indeed that country was lost, for who could be trusted?

For the first time in many years, Yorke Norroy acted on impulse. He turned the corner to the Irving Place entrance of the old Duyckinck house, ascended the steps, and rang the bell.

He had no difficulty in identifying the servant for just what he was—a Germant peasant of Max Spiegel's class. When he told the man that he wished to see Mr. Duyckinck about a "little bill," the servant grinned.

"You von't get it," he said. "But I'll call him. Vait here."

When he turned, so did Mr. Yorke Norroy. One arm shot diagonally across the other's front, edged up the chin, and kept it up at an uncertain angle. Simultaneously he seized the dangling fingers of the fellow's left hand, first forcing them backward, then doubling over the wrist so sharply that a bone snapped. One hand thus left helpless, Norroy slackened somewhat his grim grip upon the German's neck and jaw; one that if long continued would have meant death.

"I'm loosing you a little," he warned in a whisper; "but if you make the slightest sound I'll have to break your neck. Keep quiet until I bind and gag you, and you'll be none the worse except for that broken wrist."

Norroy had taken momentary silence for granted, and he was well on his way to the completion of half his task before ceasing to speak. When the man was firmly secured by Norroy's belt, his arms doubled behind him and held crooked around the secret agent's walking stick, Norroy pushed him to his knees. Here holding one palm to his prisoner's mouth lest, despite warning, he make any vocal attempts, Norroy, with that placid haste remarkable to him when on the most dangerous of duties, flipped out from eyelet after eyelet his boot lace. This leather lace, together with his fountain pen and a certain gaudy silk handkerchief that was part of the make-up of a prosperous voter from Little Italy, served to construct a very creditable gag, which was put in position in a space of time not greatly in excess of that it takes to tell of it.

Remained only the captive's feet. If they were left unsecured, the man, tied up and gagged as he was—

painful though the journey would be—could crawl back to the kitchen, where, if, as Norroy imagined, he had a companion, the sight of him would be enough to wreck the plan the secret agent proposed to attempt.

But the feet did not long remain a problem. There were velvet draperies covering the half-drawn doors of the darkened drawing-room. To hold them in their folds there must be about somewhere certain silken cords.

It was too dark to see these highly necessary and desperately desired agents of duress, but Norroy knew where they should be, and, running his hand up and down the draperies near the woodwork, he found, first a brass hook, then a cord tied in a drooping bow. He needed no more than one cord for his present purpose; but that the man might not free himself from it by rubbing together his ankles or his knees, Norroy made a loose loop over the walking stick in the middle of the prisoner's back. This was drawn taut as the cord was whisked under the man's knees, bringing them up so that they touched his chin. When the other end of the cord also adorned the walking stick, the warder of Killian Duyckinck's door resembled nothing so much as a trussed fowl.

Norroy put out a tentative foot and pushed him into the shadows of the darkened drawing-room. The man rolled like a football; a second push and he was out of sight. Norroy unloosened and pocketed the other drapery cord, for possible use in the near future, brought the folding doors nearer together, and correspondingly advanced the positions of the two por-

tières. Then he went up the stairs, two at a time, toward where he believed Killian Duyckinck's quarters were apt to be.

Norroy had known the last Duyckinck as men of that kind are apt to know one another.

Killian Duyckinck, whose birth had preceded Norroy's by a decade or so, had found nothing he wanted to do except to spend the little that a set of spend-thrifts had left behind. It did not take long to do that, so after the last Duyckinck had sold his last bit of tangible property, he began to realize on the intangible, and sold his name and position to an ambitious Oregonian who wanted a New York social position for her daughter in exchange for some of her deceased husband's dollars. Having spent as many of these as he could get, the death of his wife had left him with very little to go on with. And as "society," had completely altered since his salad days, Killian Duyckinck had found himself a middle-aged, more-or-less discredited hanger-on—a hanger-on to the fringes of that very society of which he had once been a central figure.

Then one day he, a Duyckinck, having been "posted" too long, had been quietly dropped by the club for which his father had "put him up" while he was a boy.

It must have been at that time that he had been "approached," had sold the last thing he had to sell, the shelter of his good name, the name of his ancestors, the indubitable belief in a Duyckinck being, if nothing else, a sound American.

It was the thought of this that had burned in Yorke

Norroy's brain, had burned so fiercely that for the moment he forgot prudence, forgot everything he should have remembered, once he saw Krafft enter the gate of Killian Duyckinck.

There must have been something of all this in his eyes when he burst in upon Killian, seated at his ease, a novel in his hand. At his elbow was a glass humidor bearing the Duyckinck crest and his own monogram, a humidor containing the sort of cigars one cannot buy across the counter. Flanking it was a similar but smaller humidor containing cigarettes made from sun-ripened Smyrna tobacco; grown, he would tell you, in a garden where the soil had been cultivated two thousand years, and on a wall cunningly protected from sudden frosts and shaded from too hot a sun by tricks and devices known only to a few private tobacco growers, who, being the sons and grandsons and great-grandsons of other and very ancient tobacco growers, grew tobacco as some paint pictures and others write books—in order that they may have a hand in the making of a perfect thing.

There were many evidences in this comfortable room of the price for which he had sold himself. On the little wicker rack near by, Killian's man Olcott was placing a plate of ripe peaches worth their weight in gold almost at that time of year. And the breakfast tea brewing in the silver urn was the sort that, even in Petrograd, costs a ruble a cup. Its price in New York should have been beyond the purchasing power of any one who did not have at least a five-figure income.

The whole tone of the room was blue, just as the character of it was Jacobean. It was a beautiful room, and the sun streamed through the old windows as if it loved it. And well in keeping with the room was this youthful-ancient aristocrat in a dressing gown of Spitalfields silk, also of blue, and a flowing silk stock collar that matched it and evidently worn to disguise his pajamas. There he sat, a little card table pushed into the window recess, and in the full enjoyment of his breakfast and the early-morning sunlight which shone on the silver and crystal and eggshell china of his breakfast table.

He had looked up angrily at Norroy's entrance. But the anger faded out and fear took its place when he saw who it was. Not that he knew of Norroy's state-department connection; that was a secret that had been well kept during the secret agent's twenty years of service; few outsiders knew of that except the enemies who feared him.

Norroy's face was so grim that it was terrifying.

"Send your man away, Duyckinck," he commanded. "Not downstairs, though. Next room. At once!"

The tone added another terror to the aroused guilty conscience. He was almost afraid for Olcott to go. Olcott had been with him since childhood. He was the one creature on earth who loved him, and for no selfish reason; as a father loves a son.

Yet he dared not disobey. He nodded, and the gray-headed servitor went out and closed the door behind him.

"Now, you miserable traitor," said Yorke Norroy

in his iciest tone, "just tell me one thing, and tell me quickly. This house is built on one of the Revolutionary sites. It probably has some kind of an underground passage. Tell me where it is and how to get to it."

For Norroy had been aware, for some time, that the league had been in possession of a certain old map, drawn during the Revolutionary War and showing the various secret methods of entrance and egress from the houses of those patriots who harbored colonial spies during the British possession of New York. At that time, the house of the Duyckincks had stood on land that had been the old Stuyvesant bouwerie, just outside New York proper. The house in Van Corlear Square, although farther away, had been on just such another plot of ground. So, too, had the house which, that morning, Stanley Jarboe had located. Norroy had recognized the site instantly. Of the three headquarters of the leaguers only one, Henricus Voegel's, had not some such history. But Voegel's house had been his own and had been built in an age when it was reckoned that it would never be necessary to have hidden places in which to house conspirators again. So it was probable, since the league had voluntarily chosen the Duyckinck house, that some such secret way existed.

"Listen!" said Yorke Norroy. "I don't know whether you realize it or not, but this country will be at war with Germany within another month. I prefer to forget that you have harbored the kind of people who made the crucifixion of Belgium possible—you,

an American of the old stock, of the sort of family that one was proud to point out as Americans. I am going through this affair as best I can without letting it be known that you were mixed up in it. It would not do for the world to know that a Duyckinck was a traitor. After that we could trust nobody. Tell me where that secret way is. Then, when I am through here, invent some story that will account for the presence of German bomb throwers and munition destroyers, fire bugs, and assassins in your house. Blame it on unknown servants. Get Olcott to back you up. I will never tell the truth, depend upon it. You did it for money, I suppose."

His voice trembling, his face gray, Duyckinck told him. Norroy prepared to go.

"If I do not return to this room within fifteen minutes," he said, "you will telephone that number——"

He wrote it down on a gold-mounted pad.

"In that way you will manage to clear yourself—to them. At least I hope so, for your name's sake. Tell them there where I am, who you are, and how your servants deceived you." He paused. "I hope God can forgive you," he said finally; "I cannot."

He went out, leaving behind him a man who had aged ten years in ten minutes.

CHAPTER IV

HOW HERR KNATCHBULL CAME TO HOLD UP BOTH HANDS

THE NARRATIVE OF MISS CLOVIS CLARKE

I NOW come to the happenings of the last day of my imprisonment.

I know I am not sufficiently versed in the use of words to express emotions or paint pictures to give you any idea of what I suffered during the days that followed the death of Mr. Van Corlear. On looking over what I have written, it reads like a set of statistics combined with a schoolgirl's diary. But since I have done my best, I will let the stuff stand as written, with the fervent hope, however, that if it is to be published, that some one more skillful than myself in the art of composition will edit it almost out of existence.

For, reading it over, I must confess it gives absolutely no idea of the horror and misery I endured at that detestable Knatchbull's hands. Not that he touched me—you see how faulty my diction is—because he didn't. He did nothing except sit and stare for two days and nights, as I have written, and if I

so much as closed my eyes he got up and started toward me with the stealthy tread of a tiger stalking its prey, which promptly drove away all possibility of sleeping.

It was not so much that he threatened anything. It was his silence and his stare and the imaginary images both evoked. My brain could picture him doing things far more horrible than anything he could put into words.

And that was just it. Give the man the horrible credit that is his. He had a positive genius for evil. His psychology was uncanny. He knew somehow that I loved my country well enough to have steeled myself to endure whatever befell sooner than give up the secret of the books. I speak of them in the plural because this weird, psychic genius had soon surmised that the poor dead man had told me his secret; I mean Mr. Van Corlear, who committed suicide sooner than give up the book our inhuman captor wanted so badly.

That is the word that best describes Knatchbull—inhuman.

No doubt he would have been brutal enough, even if he had never used cocaine. But in a normal state there may have been occasional twinges of conscience. Perhaps Knatchbull had discovered that the use of the drug put an end to these and left him free to do whatsoever he willed with his own entire approval. As to that I cannot say; but while I will always sympathize with morphine sufferers for poor Mr. Van Corlear's sake—for in his case, while in the grip of a habit he

hated, at least it did not rob him of his honor—I wish to go on record with the statement that there can be no possible excuse for those who use cocaine. It is mere bestial gratification.

Which brings me back to the third day of my enforced sleeplessness, confronting Knatchbull. He had retired for the first time in eight hours and had changed his clothes; had also taken a few moments, doubtless, to give himself a large dose of his drug, for he returned as wide awake as ever, eyes gleaming and glassy, and came very close to where I had fallen into a light doze.

I, you may well believe, felt more dead than alive. To sit stiffly for two days and nights with nothing to do and nothing to read, imprisoned in a stuffy underground chamber, and facing a man of whom you stand in deadly fear is more than any girl's nerves will stand. So when he returned and came so close that his face almost touched mine my self-control gave way and I screamed.

"So," he said in that guttural way that led me to believe he really was a German, although I had heard him deny that he was to the other man, Krafft, and to defy him to guess just what his nationality was. "So! You give in at last, do you? I thought you would, if I gave you enough of my fascinating companionship."

Then a bold idea came to me. Its success meant five or six hours' sleep, which would strengthen me for another siege, unless it angered him so much that he decided to kill me. And I was beginning to be as tortured for want of sleep as poor Mr. Van Corlear

had for want of that other thing, and thought that I would rather die than stay awake any longer. One who has not experienced this torture of being kept awake forcibly cannot understand.

"Yes." I continued to scream. "Yes. Keep away from me. Let me go to sleep. I must sleep. Let me sleep. I'll tell you anything. Only let me sleep."

"So!" he breathed softly. "So! Well, tell me, and you shall sleep."

"Go along the bank of the little stream near our house for about two minutes' walk until you come to a willow tree. There are little willows growing up all around the big one, so that they hide the hollow in its trunk. The book is in the hollow. You can't miss it."

Some angel of invention must have whispered the words to me, for I rattled them off as if they were uppermost in my mind. They seemed to convince Knatchbull well enough, especially as they were shrieked out hysterically. The hysterical part of it was not necessarily assumed. If it was, I had much less trouble assuming it than I had had hitherto in keeping from showing it.

I threw myself down on the bunk and buried my face in the pillow.

"Good!" commented Knatchbull. "Very good. For *you*, my dear young lady. For I must tell you that I had about made up my mind to give up my present method and leave you here without any food or water for a few days—perhaps a week, in case of obstinacy. If, in the interim, you should die——" He shrugged

his shoulders. "Well, dead you are no menace to us. It is only when you are alive that you can tell your countrymen where those books are. We do not want the books so much as we want to make sure that no Americans get them. Therefore your death would solve matters very neatly. So, you see, I have been exceedingly forbearing with you, and you should appreciate——"

He was always exceedingly wordy just after a dose of the horrible stuff; that is, for a while. Then he would sink into sullen silence, during which he would eye me in that way I have spoken of, his attitude one that made the wildest conjectures on my part seem quite possible, even exceedingly probable. But this time he was not allowed time enough to work off even the wordy state. There came a knock on the door in the code I had grown to know as heralding the other man, Krafft.

When the door opened, I heard Knatchbull ask with that sort of silky politeness which meant he was dreadfully annoyed: "Cannot I impress upon you, my dear fellow, that your society, charming as it is, is superfluous? Has Heinzmann nothing better for you to do than annoy me?"

I heard Krafft whisper something, and, peeping up, saw him draw Knatchbull out into the other room and half close the door. Some conversation ensued, during which both grew extremely excited, although their voices were not raised high enough for me to hear what they said at first.

But it was soon apparent that the sullen, ugly anger

had fallen upon Knatchbull again; for, when Krafft laughed, he burst out with:

"It's a lie. The girl has just told me where she hid the book. And it was nowhere near the place you——"

"Showing, my dear fellow," said Krafft, raising his voice, too, and imitating Knatchbull's former silkiness, "that your wonderful method has its failures. For, as it happens, here is the book."

My heart sank as I heard this statement verified by a violent oath from Knatchbull, who now tore back to the room in which I lay, confronting me with just the same sort of thin volume as the one I had so carefully hidden—*not* in the hollow willow tree, needless to say. Naturally I imagined that I identified it. My face must have showed this.

"So you would send me on a fool's errand, would you?" he demanded. "Now you shall have what I promised you a few moments before. We shall see what loneliness and hunger and lack of water will do."

He turned, ignoring Krafft, who had entered from the other room, and began to attire himself for the street; for, although he had changed his clothes a few moments before, he was in his shirt, trousers, and slippers only. Krafft, however, did not mean to be ignored.

"I came to show you this book to prove to you that you could now release Miss Clarke," he said. "It would be needlessly cruel to keep her here any longer, now that we have it. Even if she did lie to you

about its hiding place, that is no reason for further torturing her—a mere girl. I will not permit it.”

“*You* will not, eh? *You!* Then, may I ask, will your royal highness permit me to leave you for half an hour and go to Heinzmann that I may return and give you your orders to keep out of this affair—permanently.

“Why should she be kept longer?”

“Because she knows where Van Corlear hid *his* book. Do you think he was fool enough to kill himself without telling some one? He might as well have given it to us for all the good his death would have done unless he told some one who could tell our enemies some time. Yet you, who followed him from the moment he got the book, you know that he gave it to no one that night. Else why would he have gone to so much pains to lose you. He stopped in one place only, the chemist’s shop, and the prescription in his pocket showed why. Therefore it is plain he must have hidden it somewhere. Plain, ordinary logic shows that. It also shows that if he did not go to get it, it would be completely lost to the people who can harm us when *they* get it, which they never would unless he told them or some one else. He is dead. Who else remains to tell them? Plainly the girl. Now perhaps you will take yourself off and not make it necessary for me to go to Heinzmann and get you orders to clear out. Will you?”

I can only tell you what they said, not what they did, for although I heard them, as at a great distance, my eyes were too heavy to stay open and see what they

were doing. But from the way Knatchbull spoke I could see him in my mind's eye thrusting his face close to Krafft's with that ugly look I knew so well.

Evidently Krafft was a different sort from Knatchbull, although I had never known it or, in fact, given him a thought until the previous day, when it was plain he disapproved of the course Knatchbull was taking with me. But the way he had given in then showed that Krafft was the weaker, and I had not hoped much from him.

Therefore his firmness now surprised me.

"No," said Krafft. "Go to Heinzmann, if you like. Tell him I have the girl's book and that neither he nor you nor any one else shall have it until this girl is set free. As far as Van Corlear is concerned, he died from heart failure. There was no sign of violence on him, and we had searched him thoroughly and found nothing he could have used to kill himself with. And when it comes to preferring charges I shall say that *you* are already responsible for one prisoner's death and that if Van Corlear had been given just enough stuff to keep him alive that would have been torture enough to make him reveal everything. You bungled that, as you are bungling this, and I'm not going to have another death at my door, if I can prevent it. Tell Heinzmann that, too, with my compliments."

I was bound to look up at these bold words, but Knatchbull's face was such a mask of black rage that I hid my own again. The mere sight of me looking at him might direct his wrath toward me again. As

for Krafft, he was nervous enough. One could tell that by the way his cigarette glowed brighter and brighter in that underground gloom, until it seemed to be more of a red coal than a cigarette.

But he did not give way.

"I can be trusted to see that the girl does not escape," he said steadily enough, answering an angry accusation, the while keeping one hand in his jacket pocket. "But she shall sleep and she shall eat. And I shall remain."

Again I looked up stealthily. Knatchbull had on hat and greatcoat by now. He brandished his stick threateningly, but the sight of Krafft's hand outlined tightly against the cloth of his jacket pocket, with the forefinger pointed in Knatchbull's direction, deterred him from doing anything more and led me to believe that Krafft kept his pistol there.

"I will be back," said Knatchbull in a choked voice, "with others who will come to take you to Heinzmann and to the punishment you are bringing on yourself. You will regret this day's work, my friend."

He flung himself out of the room, and, as Krafft did not rise, but sat puffing at a fresh cigarette, I saw Knatchbull go through the next room and open the second iron door.

Then quite suddenly, as if he had been stung, he leaped backward and let his stick fall, making a queer, strangled sort of sound as he did so. And as Krafft leaped up, too, and ran into the other room, I saw a hand holding a leveled pistol through the door; then

a third man, a stranger to me, stepped in, kicking the door to behind him.

"Put 'em up; both of you!" he said in a curiously low, unexcited sort of voice, and the weapon shifted in such a way that it threatened Krafft, too. "Drop that gun quick!"

They "put 'em up" without a word, and I heard the heavy weapon that Krafft had drawn fall to the earthen floor with a flat sort of thud just as Knatchbull's stick had done.

CHAPTER V

IN WHICH THE FREIHERR EITEL VON KRAFFT GOES
TO MEET HIS GOD, AS A GENTLEMAN OF SUABIA
SHOULD: THE NARRATIVE OF CLOVIS CLARKE
CONCLUDED

THIS was my first sight of the man to whom I may now say I owe everything; my life, to begin with, my present career, and my happiness.

It appears that he had learned of the secret entrance to this place, and had been crouching outside the door, waiting for some one to open it, believing that, if he made any attempt to break in, the first thing my captors would do would be to kill me, since that would be the only way they could keep their secrets safe. Had he known it, he could not have broken in, anyway, without burglars' tools.

I learned all this later, of course; also that he was by no means sure that I was imprisoned here. He acknowledges, being the clever man he is and devoid of any cheap claims to infallibility, that luck had more to do with it than he, and that he had acted on impulse, inspired by the sudden anger he felt at finding that this house was the residence of one who should have been the most loyal sort of an American.

And so, seeing me through the open door, his glad surprise was such that he turned his eyes in my direction, forgetting the other two for the moment.

"Are you the Clarke girl?" he—well, stammered is the only word, although it ill accords with the sort of man he is. I can only explain his stammering by remembering the enormous importance to America of the secret he knew I alone possessed.

"Oh, look out, please!" I cried agonizedly, for I had seen one of Knatchbull's hands come down and dive into his pocket.

The stranger—for, as I have said, I did not know he was Mr. Norroy then—whipped around and brought his weapon to bear on Knatchbull, but not before the latter's hand had come out of his pocket. Apparently it held nothing to be afraid of. But I knew better, having seen him clean the thing on the previous night. It was no less than a waistcoat-pocket-sized automatic that looked like a gun-metal cigarette case with a little spout at the end. The little spout was in reality the barrel. After cleaning, I had seen Knatchbull reload it with thin, sharp steel bullets, any one of which was as dangerous as a shot from a .44-caliber revolver.

Knatchbull was smiling. "No objection to a cigarette, is there?" he asked with great politeness, opening his closed hand. He had drawn the weapon from his pocket in such a way that it was momentarily useless to him, the barrel being turned inward. Thus the spout was concealed by the fleshy part of his palm between thumb and forefinger.

Evidently Mr. Norroy knew him from some other meeting, however, for he said:

"Oh, it's you, is it? The last time I saw you you held one of these things at my head, and you undoubtedly meant to use it. Will you give me some good reason why I shouldn't use it on you?"

He nodded toward the pistol he held pointed toward Knatchbull.

"Oh, do be careful!" I warned in an agonized tone. "That's not a cigarette case he's holding. It's a——" But even as I spoke, Knatchbull shifted the thing in his hand, and before either Mr. Norroy or I realized what he meant to do he turned it in my direction and fired rapidly at me, dropping to hands and knees as he did so to avoid the stranger's fire.

It would have been the end of me but for an unexpected intervention. Krafft also knew what the cigarette case was for, and apparently knew Knatchbull better than Mr. Norroy or I, realizing that for him to be thwarted was a far bitter dose for him than merely to die. If he killed me he had succeeded, and the secret of the books was safe.

As I say, Krafft must have read all this in Knatchbull's mind, and as Knatchbull was paying no attention to Krafft, supposing him to be united in purpose with him now they had a common enemy, Krafft was the only one who anticipated Knatchbull's action. So, when the latter shifted the cigarette case and dropped to his knee, Krafft sprang at him, his hands striking Knatchbull's shoulders and deflecting his aim.

The bullets flew wild—four of them—and before

he could aim again—which he tried to do even in his cramped position—a shot from the stranger's weapon shattered his elbow—so we afterward discovered—and his false cigarette case fell to the floor.

I rushed into the other room and held out my hand to Krafft.

"You saved my life," I said. "Of course there's no way to thank you, but I hope there is some way of showing my gratitude."

He looked me full in the eyes in a most peculiar way. "There is," he replied; "by looking at me like that."

What he meant I do not know, although I have been told, when the various parts of this history are assembled, I will know.

At the time, however, no more was said. I turned to see the stranger struggling with Knatchbull, who—such was the brute courage of the man—was fighting violently, even though severely wounded. The stranger, however, lost all patience, and, extricating himself from the other, threw him by some trick heavily to the floor. Then his pistol to Knatchbull's head, he promised to blow out the spy's brains if he made another move.

"Bind him!" he directed Krafft, tossing him a length of cord he took from his pocket.

Krafft did so, and without any consideration for his wounded arm, either. But I could not feel any pity for such a brute as Knatchbull. Even had I, at first, it would have been vitiated by his own behavior. For, now that he had undoubtedly lost for good and

all, he permitted his true character to come to the surface again, and both Krafft and the stranger saw what I had seen during those horrible nights and days—a creature more bestial than any dumb brute could be.

“Now, Miss Clarke,” said Mr. Norroy, although I had not guessed at his identity even yet, “go through to the ladder and upstairs. There I think you will find some of my men looking for me. Ask for Mr. Jarboe, tell him who you are, and he will take you where you want to go. But before you leave him, lest there be any mistakes, write down the hiding place of the book. I am the Mr. Norroy Mr. Petersham told you about——”

My eyes lit up; then they filled with tears. And I forgot what I had meant to tell him immediately—that I knew of both books. For so wrapped up was I in hearing about the boy whom I thought had been killed trying to save me I could think of nothing else.

“Mr. Petersham——” I faltered.

“Jarboe will explain,” he said kindly. “Now go, please, before anything further happens. Tell Jarboe to send the others down to me. If they have not broken in the house as yet, open the door and blow this whistle three times.”

He detached a tiny gold whistle from his watch chain. But before he could say more we heard a scuffling noise near by, and then that of somebody taking an unexpected drop that jolted certain words through his chattering teeth. In another minute the doorway was crowded with men with leveled revolvers.

"It's all right, boys," I heard Mr. Norroy say; then he called two by name. "Take this man off with you." He pointed to Knatchbull. "Put him in the cell Spiegel had, and remain outside in the corridor until I come. Search him thoroughly, and keep him in sight all the time. He is the most dangerous of the league leaders, or I miss my guess. Let a doctor look after his arm, but watch him close while the doctor does it, and see he doesn't get his hands on one of the scalpels. He is downright dangerous. Off with him!"

They hustled Knatchbull off, and never was I so glad to see any one go.

"Now, Jarboe," he said, "take this young lady to——" He whispered something, then added: "Telephone Miss Hardesty or Mrs. Luyties to come and outfit her with clothes. What is this, Miss Clarke?"

For I had scribbled down not only the place where I had hidden my book, but also where the book found by Mr. Van Corlear was to be had.

In answer I told him as simply as I could all about Ethan Van Corlear, although my voice, choked enough as it was by revived thoughts of young Petersham, broke down altogether when it came to my companion's sad fate.

After I had finished, there was silence. Then Mr. Norroy took off his hat and Mr. Jarboe and the others did the same. Nothing was said, but if Ethan Van Corlear could have seen their faces he would have known he had not died in vain.

Then I had an inspiration.

"Won't you let him go, Mr. Norroy?" I begged,

referring to Krafft, of course. "You can get all the information you need from Knatchbull. Treat him as he treated Mr. Van Corlear; keep his cocaine from him. With a wounded arm, he'll need it all the more. I have never been revengeful, but this Knatchbull is a beast; he is responsible for the death of Mr. Peter-sham and maybe of my stepfather, too——"

I looked my inquiry as I spoke, and the man called Jarboe nodded and seemed about to say something, but Mr. Norroy held up his hand. I composed myself as best I could under the new blow, for, after all, I had cared more for my stepfather than he had cared for me. Then I went on passionately:

"And Van Corlear! And no one knows how many more. He meant to leave me here to die if this man Krafft hadn't come, as he said. It is true. Maybe he wouldn't be your prisoner now, nor would I be saved if he hadn't stopped on an errand of mercy——"

Yorke Norroy stopped me. "Bok," said he to the second man who had remained, "the *Vandam* sails for Rotterdam at noon to-day. Escort this gentleman to his lodgings, let him get his clothes, then see him aboard. Remain with him until she sails."

But, to our surprise, Krafft shook his head.

"I am done for as a German subject," he said. "What I did to-day in this room means life imprisonment if I return to the fatherland. Nothing can keep Knatchbull from reporting me except his instant death, and I know your laws too well for that. Before the week is out he will get through a cipher message about me. If you do not believe me, you will when you have

all four books containing the names. You will find that our secret service penetrates to every part of your government. In your prison system and police system there are many many people who will help Knatchbull to send out whatever he wishes. You have no adequate method of dealing with such men. Instant death before a firing squad is the penalty a spy pays in all countries except England and America. If they paid that penalty here, there would not be so many names in those four books, my friends."

He paused, breathing hard.

"Why do you tell us all this?" asked Mr. Norroy curiously.

"Because I am sick of the system that permits men to torture helpless creatures as Knatchbull tortured this girl. 'Anything for victory' is a poor motto if one must lose all honor, all self-respect, must become a beast, such beasts as those who ravaged Belgium. Our government denied those dastardly deeds, and I for one chose to believe that they were only English lies. But it is different to hear of things than to see them, and when, a day or so ago, I saw this girl's horror-stricken eyes fixed on Knatchbull's as a bird's are fixed on the snake about to devour it, I knew then that my country was not Prussia but Saxony; and that the empire of Germany to which we Saxons first swore allegiance is only Prussia."

He paused again, turning his face away. Then suddenly he snatched the weapon that hung loosely between Yorke Norroy's fingers, and before any one could interfere he had clapped it to his head and fired.

As it dropped from his hand, he stood, swaying and smiling for a moment, then pitched forward on his face, dead.

This, added to the excitement of three days, was too much for me. I must have fainted before he touched the floor.

CHAPTER VI

THE EDITOR CONCLUDES THE TALE

IT was a balmy day in May. In the deep embrasure of an upper window of Cove Cottage, Clovis Clarke sat, a window lately made comfortable and attractive by softly padded window seats upholstered in gayly colored chintz, above which were hangings and upon which were piles of eiderdown pillows, all of the same material. From the point of vantage, the girl could see the early-morning sun shining upon the waters of Setauket Harbor and Port Jefferson Bay. Beyond lay the Sound, all shimmering waves of brightness, and so clear was it that one could see faintly outlined in the distance the Connecticut shore.

Below in the brook, several male storks stood meditatively regarding the marshes, fat with frogs and other succulent essentials of a stork breakfast. Above, on the roof, domiciled in the shelter of the various clusters of chimney pots, and pecking disconsolately at the bits of green that grew between the interstices of the slate roof, sat three mother storks, quieting their hungry brood. Farther out in the channel, like bits of jeweled enamel or precious porcelain, shone the plumage of the herons, while overhead

darted the egrets, pouncing down on what they had not the patience to wait for like the more stoical members of their long-legged tribe.

The Sound seemed the same as before, but where once there had been a few ships now there were many, their white sails like the wings of far-distant birds. There was a difference in the harbor, too. The Setauket shipyards had not been such humming hives since Civil War days. The skeletons of new ships showed everywhere, and on the shore roads leading toward the outlying yards which, six months before, had been green with disuse, drove countless Fords and motor cycles filled with skilled shipbuilders drawn from all parts of the Eastern coast.

However, even the sight of so much beauty cannot hold one with urgent personal matters on one's mind, and the girl would continually turn her eyes from the window to the door of the near-by room, her impatience growing with each look, if one might judge from the increased velocity of her small foot, which from an occasional tapping had increased to a military ratatat.

Finally she spoke.

"Haven't you got it on yet?" she asked, trying to keep the impatience out of her voice.

"It's my arm," came the answer through the door. "It isn't as easy to move as you'd think, and hooking the collar's harder than I thought——"

"Why don't you let me do it?" she asked petulantly.

"Because I want to burst on you in all my glory," replied the male voice. "There—I've got it!"

And almost immediately after there stepped from the door of the boudoir which once had been all her own, but which had been converted into a bedroom for her husband, that young gentleman best known to us as Charles Petersham, esquire. But he was no longer that; as the brand-new uniform which had arrived only last night showed, his form of address was now Ensign Charles Petersham, U. S. N., and as his papers received from the navy department the week before would have told you, his duties were those of assistant naval constructor, detailed for special duty at the Port Jefferson and Setauket Ship-building Yards to assist his senior, Lieutenant Commander Buckles, in overseeing the building of as many as possible of "the ships that would win the war."

For, as he lay recovering from his wounds, the deeper sentiment of the country had prevailed; the descendants of those who had won America from the wilderness and had built her up to greatness had prevailed over the opinions of those who had become citizens only after all difficulties and dangers had been overcome. And so, at last, we had taken rightful place by our brothers' sides in the fight to keep the world free.

Which had made it easier for Yorke Norroy to set about interning those whose names he found in the four books, and by thus segregating them keeping the canker of "*kultur*" from spreading among others of their race. But, despite his official duties, he had spared the time to bring up the case of Charles Petersham through the bureau of naval intelligence to the

attention of the secretary of the navy. The latter had asked Norroy for a private consultation on this subject, during which Norroy dilated upon the services Petersham had rendered his country, even when that country had denied him, and showed conclusively that, had the boy not been guilty of that original error in judgment for which he had been disgraced, the existence of The Black Book might have remained unknown to him, Norroy, and that instead of the pernicious activities of the league being checked at the fountainhead, it might have taken years of surveillance to put an end to them.

For, as Clovis Clarke had predicted, Norroy had only to take a leaf from the kaiser's book where Knatchbull was concerned to learn all that remained to be known about the league. Knatchbull had persisted in his defiance for but little more than a day; then, like Ethan Van Corlear, in that he was reduced to a bunch of quivering nerves, but unlike him in that the torture in his case was not unendurable, Knatchbull found himself facing either suicide or compliance. But the bravado went out of him with the brutality, and it is doubtful whether he would have availed himself of the chance for self-destruction even had it been given him. Which it was not, one or another of Norroy's men remaining outside his cell during every second of his captivity.

Reduced to pitiful pleading, Knatchbull had told all that Norroy wanted to know, which had resulted in the discovery of the remaining hiding places and

the arrest of the wounded Heinzmann and other league leaders. These after a secret trial—for it was judged unwise to let the public know how widespread was the treason which they had inspired and directed—were sentenced to life imprisonment on proven charges of arson and incendiarism generally.

Knatchbull, however, was adjudged too dangerous a man to be left alive. He was executed, under sentence of a court-martial, for the murders of Asgard Asbjornson, stepfather to Clovis Clarke, and of the man whose name he bore; for proof had been submitted that this particular Knatchbull was in reality a certain Lodevic zu Urbanhloe, a captain in the Death's-head Hussars. He had taken the name of Knatchbull from an unfortunate Cornishman whom he slightly resembled; to which resemblance the other lost his life, since at the time he had met the real Knatchbull the Prussian officer had applied for a secret service detail and saw in the use of the other man's identity sufficient reason for making away with him, a reason his colleagues of the Wilhelmstrasse must have shared since the murder was committed in Berlin and hushed up by official order.

When Norroy had left the State, War and Navy Building after his interview with the secretary of the navy, he had taken with him his promise that Peter-sham should be given a special examination for naval constructor, for now the demand for such officers was far greater than the supply. And it was on the day

that he was notified that he had passed the examination that his wedding to Clovis Clarke had taken place.

She stood now, admiring him in his uniform. Suddenly she threw both arms about him and hid her face against his navy blue.

"I owe it all to you, dearest," the boy said, stroking her hair. "Ask the doctors how they despaired of me until that day when you came into my room at the hospital and sat there holding my hand until I rallied sufficiently to recognize you. From the moment you leaned over and kissed me I knew I just *had* to get well——"

She blushed rosy red. "I didn't know you recognized me, or I wouldn't have dared," she murmured.

"I owe it all to you, just the same," insisted Ensign Charles Petersham, U. S. N., as he leaned over for his usual ante-breakfast kiss.

As for Yorke Norroy, neither of them remembered him at all, which is the way of youth. But Yorke Norroy had forgotten them as much as they had forgotten him, and had you seen him emerge from his apartment that morning, a symphony in green, you would have thought, from his studiously vacuous face, that he had forgotten everything he ever knew worth remembering.

It would have been hard to believe that in this man was summed up the country's greatest strength in combating alien espionage. Though many years had passed since first he had won that reputation, his figure was as youthful as of yore, his clothes in keeping with

it. He wore a lounge suit of dull olivine-green serge, in color not unlike an officer's uniform, his shirt of soft pleats was of green and lavender, his socks were green, clocked with lavender also, his tie was of the same shade of opalescent greenish silk as his waistcoat. His face, wreathed in smiles, seemed empty, pointless.

But those who knew him well knew another face of his far better—the face that had a thousand tiny wrinkles about mouth and forehead when the man himself seemed as old and as wise as the Sphinx itself. And, if in his idle moments, it had become second nature for him to convince the world that nothing was of more importance to him than the exact matching of the colors of shirts and socks, they knew it must serve some purpose the wisdom of which was not to be doubted.

As indeed it was not; for though Yorke Norroy was to be reproached many times by indignant Red Cross workers and by patriotic advocates of the enlistment of all idle men with the ability to shoulder a gun, the fact that it only caused him to put up a hand to conceal a yawn made it clear to every one that he could not possibly be worth bothering about. Hence he would many times see and hear things that louder-voiced and more violent-mannered patriots would not have been allowed to see or hear, and thereby many people would have avoided certain attentions which his hearing and seeing brought upon them—attentions very much resented.

That is, until a certain day in the autumn of 'seven-

teen when he disappeared from his usual haunts, being needed more urgently elsewhere. But where that was I cannot tell you.

Not now, at any rate. For now I have told all I am allowed to tell of Secret History.

THE END

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of
A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

- Adventures of Jimmie Dale, The. By Frank L. Packard.
Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. By A. Conan Doyle.
After House, The. By Mary Roberts Rinehart.
Ailsa Paige. By Robert W. Chambers.
Alton of Somasco. By Harold Bindloss.
Amateur Gentleman, The. By Jeffery Farnol.
Anna, the Adventuress. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Anne's House of Dreams. By L. M. Montgomery.
Around Old Chester. By Margaret Deland.
Athalie. By Robert W. Chambers.
At the Mercy of Tiberius. By Augusta Evans Wilson.
Auction Block, The. By Rex Beach.
Aunt Jane of Kentucky. By Eliza C. Hall.
Awakening of Helena Richie. By Margaret Deland.
- Bab: a Sub-Deb. By Mary Roberts Rinehart.
Barrier, The. By Rex Beach.
Barbarians. By Robert W. Chambers.
Bargain True, The. By Nalbro Bartley.
Bar 20. By Clarence E. Mulford.
Bar 20 Days. By Clarence E. Mulford.
Bars of Iron, The. By Ethel M. Dell.
Beasts of Tarzan, The. By Edgar Rice Burroughs.
Beloved Traitor, The. By Frank L. Packard.
Beltane the Smith. By Jeffery Farnol.
Betrayal, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Beyond the Frontier. By Randall Parrish.
Big Timber. By Bertrand W. Sinclair.
Black Is White. By George Barr McCutcheon.
Blind Man's Eyes, The. By Wm. MacHarg and Edwin
Balmer.
Bob, Son of Battle. By Alfred Ollivant.
Boston Blackie. By Jack Boyle.
Boy with Wings, The. By Berta Ruck.
Brandon of the Engineers. By Harold Bindloss.
Broad Highway, The. By Jeffery Farnol.
Brown Study, The. By Grace S. Richmond.
Bruce of the Circle A. By Harold Titus.
Buck Peters, Ranchman. By Clarence E. Mulford.
Business of Life, The. By Robert W. Chambers.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of

A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

- Cabbages and Kings. By O. Henry.
Cabin Fever. By B. M. Bower.
Calling of Dan Matthews, The. By Harold Bell Wright.
Cape Cod Stories. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Cap'n Abe, Storekeeper. By James A. Cooper.
Cap'n Dan's Daughter. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Cap'n Eri. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Cap'n Jonah's Fortune. By James A. Cooper.
Cap'n Warren's Wards. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Chain of Evidence, A. By Carolyn Wells.
Chief Legatee, The. By Anna Katharine Green.
Cinderella Jane. By Marjorie B. Cooke.
Cinema Murder, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
City of Masks, The. By George Barr McCutcheon.
Cleek of Scotland Yard. By T. W. Hanshew.
Cleek, The Man of Forty Faces. By Thomas W. Hanshew.
Cleek's Government Cases. By Thomas W. Hanshew.
Clipped Wings. By Rupert Hughes.
Clue, The. By Carolyn Wells.
Clutch of Circumstance, The. By Marjorie Benton Cooke.
Coast of Adventure, The. By Harold Bindloss.
Coming of Cassidy, The. By Clarence E. Mulford.
Coming of the Law, The. By Chas. A. Seltzer.
Conquest of Canaan, The. By Booth Tarkington.
Conspirators, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Court of Inquiry, A. By Grace S. Richmond.
Cow Puncher, The. By Robert J. C. Stead.
Crimson Gardenia, The, and Other Tales of Adventure. By
Rex Beach.
Cross Currents. By Author of "Pollyanna."
Cry in the Wilderness, A. By Mary E. Waller.
- Danger, And Other Stories. By A. Conan Doyle.
Dark Hollow, The. By Anna Katharine Green.
Dark Star, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Daughter Pays, The. By Mrs. Baillie Reynolds.
Day of Days, The. By Louis Joseph Vance.
Depot Master, The. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Desired Woman, The. By Will N. Harben.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of
A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

Destroying Angel, The. By Louis Jos. Vance.
Devil's Own, The. By Randall Parrish.
Double Traitor, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

Empty Pockets. By Rupert Hughes.
Eyes of the Blind, The. By Arthur Somers Roche.
Eye of Dread, The. By Payne Erskine.
Eyes of the World, The. By Harold Bell Wright.
Extricating Obadiah. By Joseph C. Lincoln.

Felix O'Day. By F. Hopkinson Smith.
54-40 or Fight. By Emerson Hough.
Fighting Chance, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Fighting Shepherdess, The. By Caroline Lockhart.
Financier, The. By Theodore Dreiser.
Flame, The. By Olive Wadsley.
Flamsted Quarries. By Mary E. Wallar.
Forfeit, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Four Million, The. By O. Henry.
Fruitful Vine, The. By Robert Hichens.
Further Adventures of Jimmie Dale, The. By Frank L. Packard.

Girl of the Blue Ridge, A. By Payne Erskine.
Girl from Keller's, The. By Harold Bindloss.
Girl Philippa, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Girls at His Billet, The. By Berta Ruck.
God's Country and the Woman. By James Oliver Curwood.
Going Some. By Rex Beach.
Golden Slipper, The. By Anna Katharine Green.
Golden Woman, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Greater Love Hath No Man. By Frank L. Packard.
Greyfriars Bobby. By Eleanor Atkinson.
Gun Brand, The. By James B. Hendryx.

Halcyone. By Elinor Glyn.
Hand of Fu-Manchu, The. By Sax Rohmer.
Havoc. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Heart of the Desert, The. By Honoré Willsie.
Heart of the Hills, The. By John Fox, Jr.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of

A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

Heart of the Sunset. By Rex Beach.
Heart of Thunder Mountain, The. By Edfrid A. Bingham.
Her Weight in Gold. By Geo. B. McCutcheon.
Hidden Children, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Hidden Spring, The. By Clarence B. Kelland.
Hillman, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Hills of Refuge, The. By Will N. Harben.
His Official Fiancee. By Berta Ruck.
Honor of the Big Snows. By James Oliver Curwood.
Hopalong Cassidy. By Clarence E. Mulford.
Hound from the North, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
House of the Whispering Pines, The. By Anna Katharine Green.
Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker. By S. Weir Mitchell, M.D.

I Conquered. By Harold Titus.
Illustrious Prince, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
In Another Girl's Shoes. By Berta Ruck.
Indifference of Juliet, The. By Grace S. Richmond.
Infelice. By Augusta Evans Wilson.
Initials Only. By Anna Katharine Green.
Inner Law, The. By Will N. Harben.
Innocent. By Marie Corelli.
Insidious Dr. Fu-Manchu, The. By Sax Rohmer.
In the Brooding Wild. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Intriguers, The. By Harold Bindloss.
Iron Trail, The. By Rex Beach.
Iron Woman, The. By Margaret Deland.
I Spy. By Natalie Sumner Lincoln.

Japonette. By Robert W. Chambers.
Jean of the Lazy A. By B. M. Bower.
Jeanne of the Marshes. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Jennie Gerhardt. By Theodore Dreiser.
Judgment House, The. By Gilbert Parker.

Keeper of the Door, The. By Ethel M. Dell.
Keith of the Border. By Randall Parrish.
Kent Knowles: Quahaug. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Kingdom of the Blind, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of
A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

-
- King Spruce. By Holman Day.
King's Widow, The. By Mrs. Baillie Reynolds.
Knave of Diamonds, The. By Ethel M. Dell.
- Ladder of Swords. By Gilbert Parker.
Lady Betty Across the Water. By C. N. & A. M. Williamson.
Land-Girl's Love Story, A. By Berta Ruck.
Landloper, The. By Holman Day.
Land of Long Ago, The. By Eliza Calvert Hall.
Land of Strong Men, The. By A. M. Chisholm.
Last Trail, The. By Zane Grey.
Laugh and Live. By Douglas Fairbanks.
Laughing Bill Hyde. By Rex Beach.
Laughing Girl, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Law Breakers, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Lifted Veil, The. By Basil King.
Lighted Way, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Lin McLean. By Owen Wister.
Lonesome Land. By B. M. Bower.
Lone Wolf, The. By Louis Joseph Vance.
Long Ever Ago. By Rupert Hughes.
Lonely Stronghold, The. By Mrs. Baillie Reynolds.
Long Live the King. By Mary Roberts Rinehart.
Long Roll, The. By Mary Johnston.
Lord Tony's Wife. By Baroness Orczy.
Lost Ambassador. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Lost Prince, The. By Frances Hodgson Burnett.
Lydia of the Pines. By Honoré Willsie.
- Maid of the Forest, The. By Randall Parrish.
Maid of the Whispering Hills, The. By Vingie E. Roe.
Maids of Paradise, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Major, The. By Ralph Connor.
Maker of History, A. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Malefactor, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Man from Bar 20, The. By Clarence E. Mulford.
Man in Grey, The. By Baroness Orczy.
Man Trail, The. By Henry Oyen.
Man Who Couldn't Sleep, The. By Arthur Stringer.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of
A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

Man with the Club Foot, The. By Valentine Williams.

Mary-'Gusta. By Joseph C. Lincoln.

Mary Moreland. By Marie Van Vorst.

Mary Regan. By Leroy Scott.

Master Mummer, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes. By A. Conan Doyle.

Men Who Wrought, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.

Mischief Maker, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

Missioner, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

Miss Million's Maid. By Berta Ruck.

Molly McDonald. By Randall Parrish.

Money Master, The. By Gilbert Parker.

Money Moon, The. By Jeffery Farnol.

Mountain Girl, The. By Payne Erskine.

Moving Finger, The. By Natalie Sumner Lincoln.

Mr. Bingle. By George Barr McCutcheon.

Mr. Grex of Monte Carlo. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

Mr. Pratt. By Joseph C. Lincoln.

Mr. Pratt's Patients. By Joseph C. Lincoln.

Mrs. Belfame. By Gertrude Atherton.

Mrs. Red Pepper. By Grace S. Richmond.

My Lady Caprice. By Jeffrey Farnol.

My Lady of the North. By Randall Parrish.

My Lady of the South. By Randall Parrish.

Mystery of the Hasty Arrow, The. By Anna K. Green.

Nameless Man, The. By Nataile Sumner Lincoln.

Ne'er-Do-Well, The. By Rex Beach.

Nest Builders, The. By Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale.

Net, The. By Rex Beach.

New Clarion. By Will N. Harben.

Night Operator, The. By Frank L. Packard.

Night Riders, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.

Nobody. By Louis Joseph Vance.

Okewood of the Secret Service. By the Author of "The
Man with the Club Foot."

One Way Trail, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.

Open, Sesame. By Mrs. Baillie Reynolds.

Otherwise Phyllis. By Meredith Nicholson.

Outlaw, The. By Jackson Gregory.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of
A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

Paradise Auction. By Nalbro Bartley.
Pardners. By Rex Beach.
Parrot & Co. By Harold MacGrath.
Partners of the Night. By Leroy Scott.
Partners of the Tide. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Passionate Friends, The. By H. G. Wells.
Patrol of the Sun Dance Trail, The. By Ralph Connor.
Paul Anthony, Christian. By Hiram W. Hays.
Pawns Count, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
People's Man, A. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Perch of the Devil. By Gertrude Atherton.
Peter Ruff and the Double Four. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Pidgin Island. By Harold MacGrath.
Place of Honeymoon, The. By Harold MacGrath.
Pool of Flame, The. By Louis Joseph Vance.
Postmaster, The. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Prairie Wife, The. By Arthur Stringer.
Price of the Prairie, The. By Margaret Hill McCarter.
Prince of Sinners, A. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Promise, The. By J. B. Hendryx.
Proof of the Pudding, The. By Meredith Nicholson.

Rainbow's End, The. By Rex Beach.
Ranch at the Wolverine, The. By B. M. Bower.
Ranching for Sylvia. By Harold Bindloss.
Ransom. By Arthur Somers Roche.
Reason Why, The. By Elinor Glyn.
Reclaimers, The. By Margaret Hill McCarter.
Red Mist, The. By Randall Parrish.
Red Pepper Burns. By Grace S. Richmond.
Red Pepper's Patients. By Grace S. Richmond.
Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary, The. By Anne Warner.
Restless Sex, The. By Robert W. Chambers.
Return of Dr. Fu-Manchu, The. By Sax Rohmer.
Return of Tarzan, The. By Edgar Rice Burroughs.
Riddle of Night, The. By Thomas W. Hanshew.
Rim of the Desert, The. By Ada Woodruff Anderson.
Rise of Roscoe Paine, The. By J. C. Lincoln.
Rising Tide, The. By Margaret Deland.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of

A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

Rocks of Valpré, The. By Ethel M. Dell.
Rogue by Compulsion, A. By Victor Bridges.
Room Number 3. By Anna Katharine Green.
Rose in the Ring, The. By George Barr McCutcheon.
Rose of Old Harpeth, The. By Maria Thompson Daviess.
Round the Corner in Gay Street. By Grace S. Richmond.

Second Choice. By Will N. Harben.
Second Violin, The. By Grace S. Richmond.
Secret History. By C. N. & A. M. Williamson.
Secret of the Reef, The. By Harold Bindloss.
Seven Darlings, The. By Gouverneur Morris.
Shavings. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Shepherd of the Hills, The. By Harold Bell Wright.
Sheriff of Dyke Hole, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Sherry. By George Barr McCutcheon.
Side of the Angels, The. By Basil King.
Silver Horde, The. By Rex Beach.
Sin That Was His, The. By Frank L. Packard.
Sixty-first Second, The. By Owen Johnson.
Soldier of the Legion, A. By C. N. & A. M. Williamson.
Son of His Father, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Son of Tarzan, The. By Edgar Rice Burroughs.
Source, The. By Clarence Buddington Kelland.
Speckled Bird, A. By Augusta Evans Wilson.
Spirit in Prison, A. By Robert Hichens.
Spirit of the Border, The. (New Edition.) By Zane Grey.
Spoilers, The. By Rex Beach.
Steele of the Royal Mounted. By James Oliver Curwood.
Still Jim. By Honoré Willsie.
Story of Foss River Ranch, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Story of Marco, The. By Eleanor H. Porter.
Strange Case of Cavendish, The. By Randall Parrish.
Strawberry Acres. By Grace S. Richmond.
Sudden Jim. By Clarence B. Kelland.

Tales of Sherlock Holmes. By A. Conan Doyle.
Tarzan of the Apes. By Edgar R. Burroughs.
Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar. By Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of
A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

Tempting of Tavernake, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Tess of the D'Urbervilles. By Thos. Hardy.
Thankful's Inheritance. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
That Affair Next Door. By Anna Katharine Green.
That Printer of Udell's. By Harold Bell Wright.
Their Yesterdays. By Harold Bell Wright.
Thirteenth Commandment, The. By Rupert Hughes.
Three of Hearts, The. By Berta Ruck.
Three Strings, The. By Natalie Sumner Lincoln.
Threshold, The. By Marjorie Benton Cooke.
Throwback, The. By Alfred Henry Lewis.
Tish. By Mary Roberts Rinehart.
To M. L. G.; or, He Who Passed. Anon.
Trail of the Axe, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Trail to Yesterday, The. By Chas. A. Seltzer.
Treasure of Heaven, The. By Marie Corelli.
Triumph, The. By Will N. Harben.
T. Tembarom. By Frances Hodgson Burnett.
Turn of the Tide. By Author of "Pollyanna."
Twenty-fourth of June, The. By Grace S. Richmond.
Twins of Suffering Creek, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Two-Gun Man, The. By Chas. A. Seltzer.

Uncle William. By Jeannette Lee.
Under Handicap. By Jackson Gregory.
Under the Country Sky. By Grace S. Richmond.
Unforgiving Offender, The. By John Reed Scott.
Unknown Mr. Kent, The. By Roy Norton.
Unpardonable Sin, The. By Major Rupert Hughes.
Up From Slavery. By Booker T. Washington.

Valiants of Virginia, The. By Hallie Ermine Rives.
Valley of Fear, The. By Sir A. Conan Doyle.
Vanished Messenger, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
Vanguards of the Plains. By Margaret Hill McCarter.
Vashti. By Augusta Evans Wilson.
Virtuous Wives. By Owen Johnson.
Visioning, The. By Susan Glaspell.

Popular Copyright Novels

AT MODERATE PRICES

Ask Your Dealer for a Complete List of

A. L. Burt Company's Popular Copyright Fiction

Waif-o'-the-Sea. By Cyrus Townsend Brady.
Wall of Men, A. By Margaret H. McCarter.
Watchers of the Plans, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Way Home, The. By Basil King.
Way of an Eagle, The. By E. M. Dell.
Way of the Strong, The. By Ridgwell Cullum.
Way of These Women, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.
We Can't Have Everything. By Major Rupert Hughes.
Weavers, The. By Gilbert Parker.
When a Man's a Man. By Harold Bell Wright.
When Wilderness Was King. By Randall Parrish.
Where the Trail Divides. By Will Lillibridge.
Where There's a Will. By Mary R. Rinehart.
White Sister, The. By Marion Crawford.
Who Goes There? By Robert W. Chambers.
Why Not. By Margaret Widdemer.
Window at the White Cat, The. By Mary Roberts Rinehart.
Winds of Chance, The. By Rex Beach.
Wings of Youth, The. By Elizabeth Jordan.
Winning of Barbara Worth, The. By Harold Bell Wright.
Wire Devils, The. By Frank L. Packard.
Winning the Wilderness. By Margaret Hill McCarter.
Wishing Ring Man, The. By Margaret Widdemer.
With Juliet in England. By Grace S. Richmond.
Wolves of the Sea. By Randall Parrish.
Woman Gives, The. By Owen Johnson.
Woman Haters, The. By Joseph C. Lincoln.
Woman in Question, The. By John Reed Scott.
Woman Thou Gavest Me, The. By Hall Caine.
Woodcarver of 'Lympus, The. By Mary E. Waller.
Wooing of Rosamond Fayre, The. By Berta Ruck.
World for Sale, The. By Gilbert-Parker.

Years for Rachel, The. By Berta Ruck.
Yellow Claw, The. By Sax Rohmer.
You Never Know Your Luck. By Gilbert Parker.

Zeppelin's Passenger, The. By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 127 918 1

